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It's easy to write your own adventures, especially when all the programming's been done for you! Step inside for the program you've been waiting for. All you need to take with you is your trusty Commodore 64 ... and your imagination! *Dougie Bern*

PAGE 50

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PROGRAMMING

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01-631 1433

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Y64 HELPLINE
Martin McGuinness
(*Y64* Helpline enquiries between 10am-1pm and 2-5pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays *only*!)

Your 64, Sportscene Specialist Press, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE.

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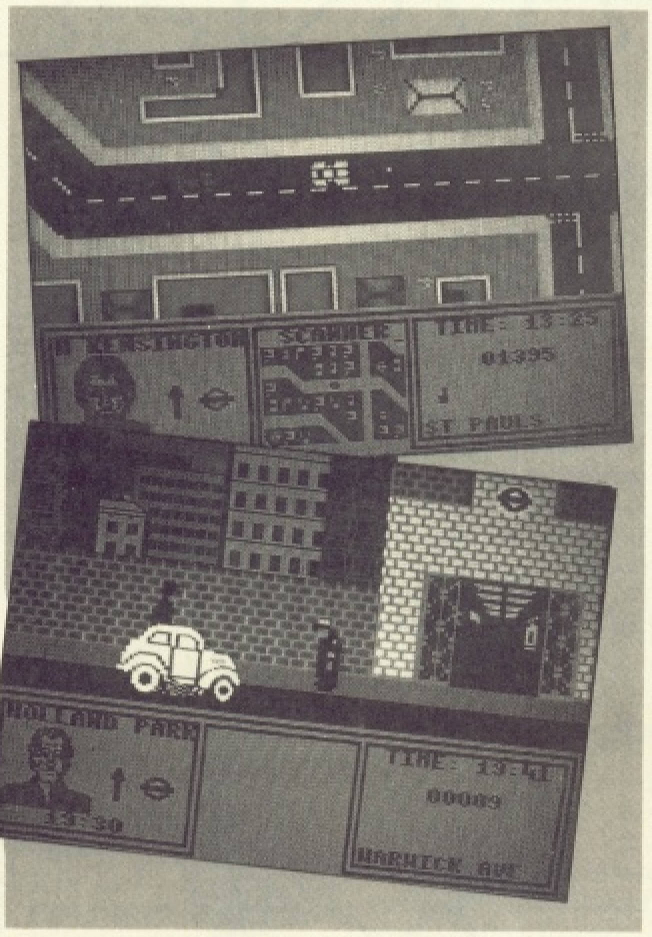
If you're in the market for a chess game with a difference, the follow-up to Daley Thompson's Decathlon *or a hardware gadget to make loading more efficient — as well as our usual foray into the world of arcade high scores, Compunet and adventures — then read on ...*

Broad Street Or Busk?

You've heard the soundtrack, read the book, avoided the film ... now play the game! Following the release of *Ghostbusters* by Activision, Argus Press Software has hit the mega-movie trend with its launch of *Give My Regards To Broad Street.*

Designed by Mind Games, it even has the approval of Paul McCartney — which must be fab! In the game you get the chance to take the part of the maestro hisself (*Wowee! Ed.*) and your first move is to locate the various members of the band who are scattered around London. You must also collect the 10 lost chords from the missing master tape of *No More Lonely Nights* — and all by midnight. Failure to complete this essential task will condemn you to join the ageing rock stars busking outside Leicester Square tube station.

The game comes complete with a map of London and biographies of the characters — plus colour pictures of Paul, Linda and Ringo. Available on cassette, *Give My Regards To Broad Street* will set you back £7.99. Those panting at the leash can give Peter Holme a ring on 01-439 0666 for further illuminating details.



A hard day's night in Broad Street? Yeah, yeah, yeah!

Unzip An Interface

Castle Associates of Scarborough is proclaiming the release of CBM 64 interface. The Banana (R) interface was developed with the co-operation of active craft, design and technology teachers specifically for teaching control.

The Banana is zipped up inside heavy duty metal casing and comes with a fully comprehensive instruction booklet that offers a goodly selection of introductory programs and experiments. Practical features include eight independent outputs, driving relays and eight +12 volt logic signals for controlling DC motors, stepper motors and other devices. There's also an anti-panic circuit ... hit Break or Run/Stop and all the functions become inoperative. The company says a full range of specific experiment hardware and software will also be available. The Banana, available direct from the manufacturers, comes with a full one year's warranty.

You want to know more? Then, phone Peter Bull or Peter Brierly (technical queries only!) on (0723) 584250.

Don't slip up ... get yourself a Banana interface.



"I'm From Your 64 ..."

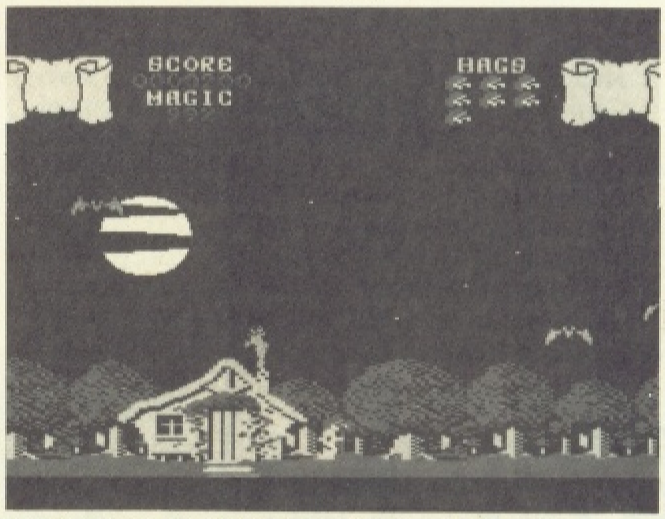
Here at *Y64*, we've had a number of complaints that our magazine's name has been taken in vain — but remember, readers ringing up manufacturers trying to blag software/hardware run the definite risk of being prosecuted. Most get caught (which is how we find out in the first place!), so don't feel tempted. And to the industry — if you're not sure you're taking to a true representative of *Y64*, phone back on 01-631 1433 ... you know it makes sense!

Bewitched!

From the company that bought you *The Evil Dead* comes another one in the same vein ... *Cauldron*, priced at £7.99.

In the game, you get to play a witch, dashing around (in *Defender* style) to collect all the ingredients you need to mix up the magic potion you'll need to defeat the 'evil pumpkin' and win the 'golden broomstick' award. Of course, there's the usual sprinkling of 'nasties', such as ghosts, bats, seagulls and sharks that get in your way just as you think you're getting somewhere!

If you can't wait for our review in next month's Action Replay, check it out for yourself at Palace Software's pad in Oxford Street or ring 01-278 0751.



Ghoulish goings-on in Palace Software's *Cauldron*.

'Net A Celebrity

Micronet 800 has launched *Celebrity Chatline*, a new interactive service that's aimed at micro users. The first programme was scheduled the 20th of March.

Live programmes will go out on a regular weekly basis between 7-8pm. The plan is for David Babsky (Micronet's Editor) to travel to the homes of selected 'celebrities' ... where Micronet subscribers will then be able to electronically input their questions; David, of course, will be inputting the celebrity's response. The live and pulsating conversation that results will be published chronologically for all micro subscribers to see.

Micronet will soon be publishing a list of forthcoming celebrity fodder for interview on the database — to give micro users time to prepare their most difficult questions. First in line for the chopping block is Michael Feldman, producer of Channel Four's computer programme *4 Computer Buffs*. Micronet invites you to "dial in at 7pm for for a slice of microcomputing history".

More details from Claire Walker on 01-741 3379, or the Prestel Mailbox — 017413379.

YOUR 64 ADVENTURE HELPLINE

For those of you who didn't manage to grab hold of last month's issue (*Shame on you. Ed.*), what we're trying to do here is set up a 'write-in' service for readers whose main passion in life is getting the better of adventure games.

We've all experienced the frustrations of splashing out a tenner on an adventure progam, only to find that after negotiating the first few locations, the hassles start setting in. Of course, the manufacturers of the game will be happy to give you the odd hint if you ring them up ... but why let it stop there?

If you've overcome a particular difficulty in an adventure, why not let your fellow *Y64* readers in on the secret ... you never know, they might be able to help you at some stage! Which brings us neatly to the other side of the coin — the *Y64* Adventure Helpline can also be made to work for you if you're having problems. Just write and tell us the mess you've managed to get into, along with your phone number or address, and someone who has already solved that hassle will be able to put you out of your misery, and you could make a friend into the bargain!

All you have to do to make full use of the *Y64* Adventure Helpline is to fill in the coupon (or a photocopy of same) and post it off. Of course, if you're an adventure 'know-it-all', write and tell us your hints 'n' tips and, if they're published, we'll send you one of the latest adventure packages for the 64.

And, breaking all deadline records, we've already had a couple of keen adventure enthusiasts on the phone offering their services:

Twin Kingdom Valley, Golden Baton
Keith Randle, 16 Kildermorie Close, Colchester. Tel. (0206) 841165

Heroes of Karn, Catacombs, Zim Zala Bim
Steve Syrett, 28 Fairstone Close, Mill Lane, Hastings PN35 5EZ. Tel. (0424) 440890

So, if you're having problems with these titles, get in touch.

Enthusiastic adventurers should write to *Y64* Adventure Helpline, *Your 64*, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Look forward to hearing from you!

Y64 ADVENTURE HELPLINE

I'm admitting failure with/probably the No.1 expert on* ....

....

Here's my problem/tactical hint* ....

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*Delete as applicable

Name ....

Address ....

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.... Postcode ....

Phone ....

And I'll be there from .... (am/pm)

Complete this coupon (or a photocopy of same) and send it off to Y64 Adventure Helpline, *Your 64*, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE.

Elementary My Dear Melbourne!



The two *Sherlock* winners desperately looking for the missing corpse.

Sherlock from Melbourne House has just been cracked by super sleuths Paul and David Cunningham from Morpeth, Northumberland. The boys, aged 17 and 18, took three months to complete the adventure and reckoned *Sherlock* was even more complicated than *The Hobbit!*

Alfred Milgrom, Managing Director of Melbourne, was very impressed by the achievement (as well he should be!) and proceeded to invite Paul and David to the hallowed halls of Melbourne House. They were also treated to lunch at the Sherlock Holmes restaurant — which, among the combustibles, incorporates a museum devoted to the Conan Doyle character.

However, the brothers have only solved the mystery on the Spectrum; they've yet to work their way through the CBM 64 version. So, here's a challenge to all you *Y64* readers ... how about trying to solve the adventure before Paul and David, to thus become the Commodore super sleuths of 1985?

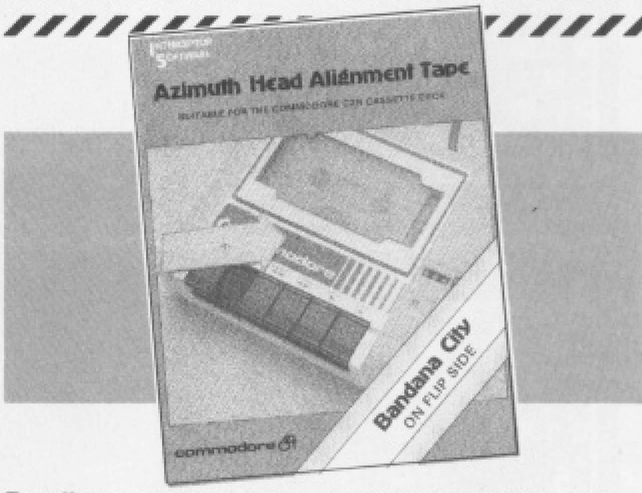
Further snippets of information can be gleaned from Melbourne House, on 01-940 6064.

Where's Bongo?

Booming on to the British market through US Gold comes Sega's *Congo Bongo*.

It's a game where the intrepid player takes on the role of a hunter in a jungle safari, and the objective is to capture the mischevious gorilla, Congo Bongo. But climbing jungle mountains, dodging coconuts and steering clear of hordes of horrid monkeys can quickly make you wish you'd stayed at home — it's no place for the faint of heart!

Congo Bongo is a two-screen game for one or two players and you can hack your way through the undergrowth with either joystick or keyboard. Order it over the jungle telegraph on cassette and disk at £9.95 and £12.95 respectively. If you prefer more modern means of communication, phone US Gold on 021-359 3020.



Re-align your tape heads — with Interceptor Micro.

Getting A Head!

If you're fed up with not being able to load all your software first time, maybe Interceptor Micro's has come up with the answer.

The Azimuth Head Alignment Tape is designed to allow 64 users to re-align the tape on your cassette machine with the minimum of hassle. Of course, for the less technically-minded, there's an instruction manual, as well as a special screwdriver and pointers. And, just to show you that the company means business, it's included a bonus test game — called *Bandana City* — to prove to yourself that you can load games efficiently.

The whole kaboodle comes complete for £8.99. Make your enquiries on (0735) 671145.

That Man Daley Again

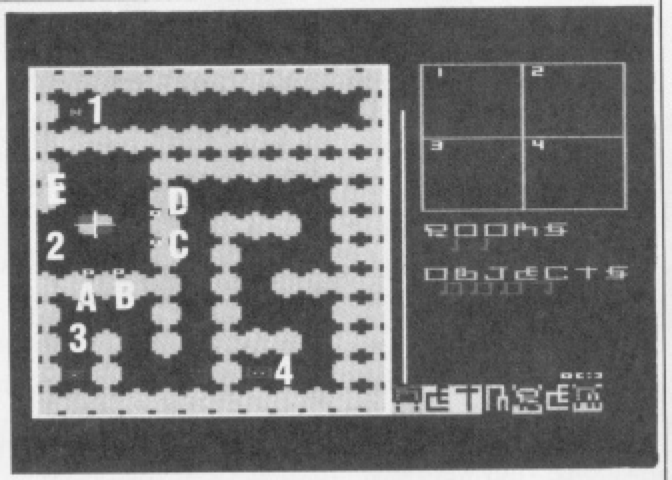
Ocean has announced a follow-up to *Daley Thompson's Decathlon* for the 64. Entitled *Daley Thompson's Super Test*, it features ten of Daley's other favourite Olympic events — including cycling, swimming, canoeing and clay-pigeon shooting. Sports enthusiasts can compete against Britain's mega-superstar and challenge his sporting ability via the joystick ... and you'd better have plenty of 'sticks standing by!

Daley Thompson's Super Test, released on cassette, will retail at £7.95. Ocean also stresses that all royalties will go to the British Athletic Board — which should give them a good run for their money (*Thank you and good night! Ed.*).

MAGAZINE HEALTH WARNING Using scissors on this page may impair the overall health of this magazine — please use a photocopy instead!

ARCADE ACE

Our resident joystick junkie's back with more hints and tips for arcade afficienados.



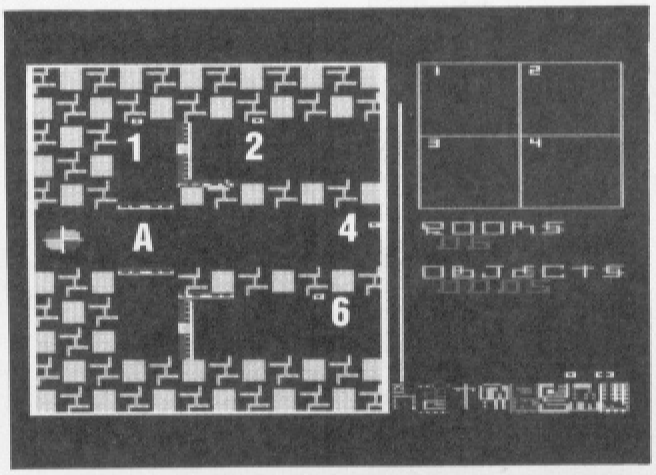
This month, I'm going to be devoting my entire column to Beyond's *Ankh* — a game that seems to be causing all sorts of problems, at least judging from the letters I've received. I won't spoil the fun by giving you the complete solution, but you'll find enough hints here to get a bit further than I did in the first few days!

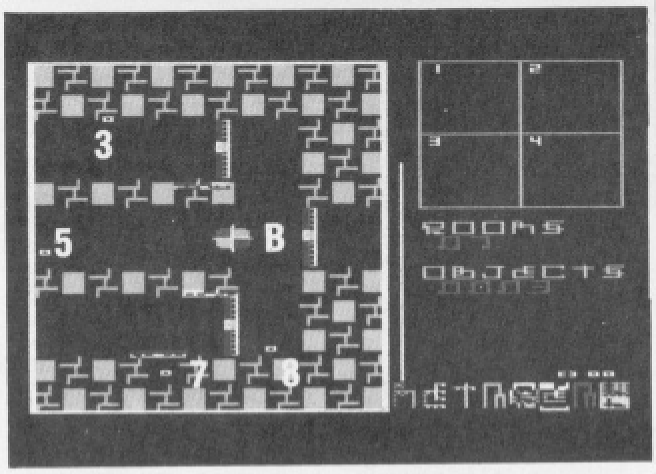
The first thing you've got to sort out is the joystick control — the fire-button and Shift Lock key can be used to stop you dead, forstalling any collisions or attack from aliens. But, to complete *Ankh,* you've got to gather the four musical triangles scattered around the screens. The first of these can be found in the ten 'numbered' rooms; these are sited to the south of the starting screen and are made up of numeric symbols, zero to nine. The trick is to visit each room in order, firing at the blue and white sqaures to gain access to the next room. Once you've visited the ninth room, nip back to room one, pick up the triangular piece and swop it for the musical triangle in room zero. Got that?

Take a look at the individual screenshots for detailed hints on finding your way around some of the more difficult locations.

Well, my joystick's calling to me . . . but, remember, if there's an arcade screen you're having problems with, or you just want to share some hints and tips with your fellow *Y64* readers, write to Arcade Ace, *Your 64,* 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE.

Try and imagine the whole screen as a monitor (1), keyboard (2), an unprogrammed robot (3) and the enemy (4) — and your mission is to destroy the enemy. Here you've got to prod the white keys in the following order: C, B, C, A, C, B, B, D, D, D, B, C, B, D; now press the 'E' key and the robot will move around to destroy the enemy. Once destroyed, the door that was locked on the previous screen will now be open.





These two rooms are tricky — and you'll need to take them together if you're going to get through to the next room. First off, go to the top-right of the two screens, fire at 8, and move on to 3 and prod it. Go left to A, fire at 4 and nip upwards as quickly as possible. Now prod 2, move to B, fire at 5 and 7, and change screens. Open the top-left door and fire at 1, and then fire at 6. Now change screens again, and you'll find the door's open to the next room. S'easy innit!

Cresta Incentive

Incentive Software has bought the exclusive rights to *Moon Cresta* from Nichibutsu (*Who he? Ed.*). This little astro-gem will be released for the Commodore 64 by the time you're reading this.

The game is considered a classic 'shoot-'em-up' of its kind, and features include stage docking and multiple firepower. An actual *Moon Cresta* arcade machine is the prize offered by Incentive for the first person to obtain a score of 30,000 points or more. OK, you lot ... up and at 'em!

Moon Cresta costs £6.95 and you'll find it at all leading stockists.

Incentive Software is on (0734) 591678.



Score more than 30,000 on *Moon Cresta* ... and win the real thing!

For The Record

Binatone has just launched a purpose-designed data recorder for the Commodore 64 and VIC 20 at a price of £34.95; the device offers optimised load/save circuitry, cue/review facility and an accurate tape counter for program indexing. The Binatone model 01/6560 is plug-compatible with the 64 and VIC and features a pause button, front-loading format and uses any standard audio cassette as a storage medium.

Dial up Binatone on 01-903 5211/6322, should you require further enlightenment.



The Binatone 'front-loader' — all mod-cons for £34.95.

One Over The Eight

Activision has at last launched its eight new games so spendidly displayed at the recent LET show.

For 'new releases' watchers everywhere, there are: *Master Of The Lamps, Web Dimension, Rock 'N' Bolt,* and *Great American Cross Country Race* — all released on cassette or disk at £10.99 and £19.99 respectively. Plus there's *Pastfinder* (see Action Replay this month), and *Mindshadow* and *The Tracer Sanction* available on disk only (at £19.99) and, finally, *The Music Studio* which costs £10.99 on cassette and £14.99 on disk.

Find out more from Activision on (0628) 75171.



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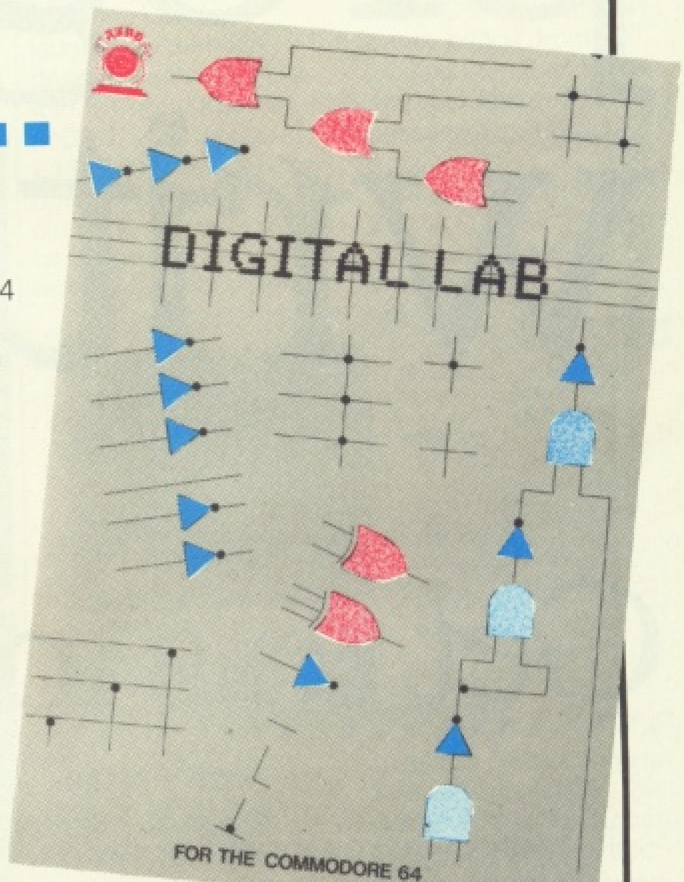
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Lode Runner is very user-friendly/great fun! Lode Runner is a very well thought-out package and is extremely playable. A must for game connoisseurs.
Tom Hussey

POPULAR Computing WEEKLY

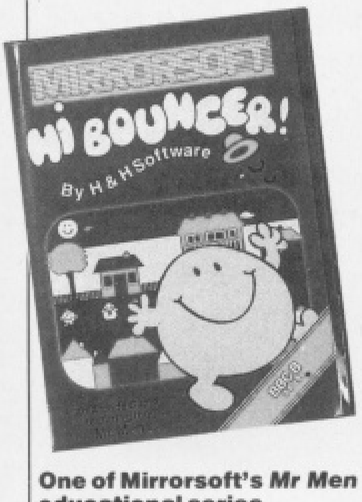
LODE RUNNER COMPETITION

Send us your best screen design, on cassette or disk, by 30th June 1985, to the address below. It may become one of the best British screens to be included on **'CHAMPIONSHIP LODE RUNNER'**, for release by Ariolasoft later this year. A prize of a **Mini Krugerrand** will also be awarded for each screen used.

***AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD SOFTWARE RETAILERS** – If it's not there, please order it – or in case of difficulty send your crossed cheque/P.O. made out to **Ariolasoft U.K. Ltd.** including your own name and address, to Ariolasoft U.K. Ltd., Suite 105/106, Asphalte House, Palace Street, London SW1E 5HS.*

▶ *Lode Runner Cassette £9.95.* ▶ *Lode Runner Disk £12.95 – includes VAT & p&p. U.K. orders only.*

ariolasoft
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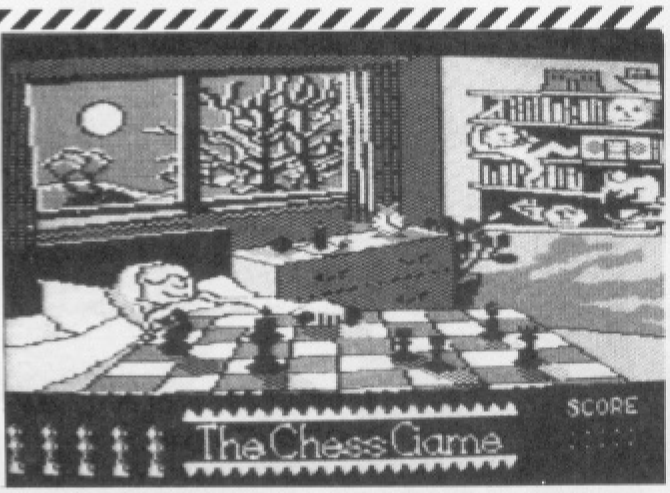
One of Mirrorsoft's *Mr Men* educational series.

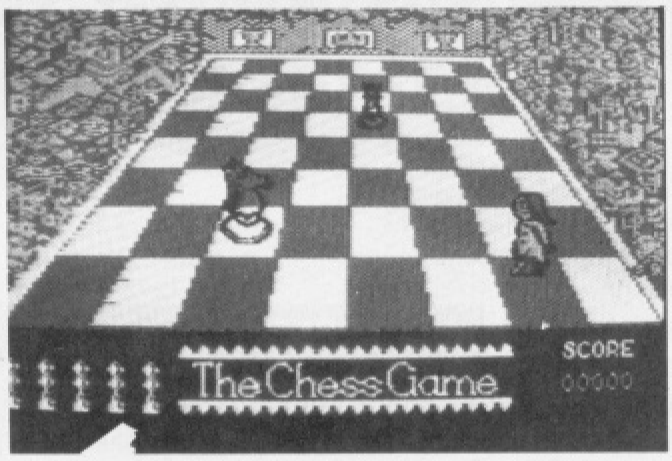
More From Mirrorsoft

New 64 release from Mirrorsoft, *Hi-Bouncer*, looks set to challenge everyone from the littlest brat to the most hardened arcade freak; it costs £6.95 on cassette and £9.95 on disk. Other new goodies are: *Star Seeker*, that brings the London Planetarium into your living room (it says here) at a cost of £9.95 (cassette) and £12.95 (disk); for learners, there's *Here And There With The Mr Men*, teaching children about left, right, up and down for £7.95 (tape) or £10.95 (disk); while *Word Games With The Mr Men* sets out to aid learners with reading and spelling skills using various parts of English grammar — £9.95 (cassette) and £12.95 (disk).

Mirrorsoft is on 01-822 3947.

Chess That Isn't





an arcade extravaganza from Microclassic!

MicroClassic is soon to release a new game for the Commodore 64 which suffers under the somewhat misleading title of *The Chess Game*.

Chief programmer Peter Hodkin explained, "*The Chess Game* will shock and delight people. Contrary to what the title suggests, the game doesn't actually play chess — it is, in fact, a brilliantly conceived arcade game. The animation is completely three-dimensional and over 750 different sprite definitions are used to define the main characteristics alone."

The Chess Game will be MicroClassic's first release under its own name (the company produced the 64 version of *Hunchback* for Ocean software last year) and should be available in June. However, those quick off the mark and with a rash gleam in their eye can go for the £2.00 discount on all orders received before launch date. Otherwise, the price tag will be £7.95.

MicroClassic's Mark McQuade will tell you more if you write to Greenfields, Priory Road, Forest Row, Sussex. RH18 5JD.



Computer tapes from Ross Electronics.

Pick Up A Five Pack!

Ross Electronics RX2 home computer tapes are now available in convenient packs of five. Retailing at VAT-inclusive prices of around £3.25 for the RX2-C12 cassettes (six minute program each side) and around £3.30 for the RX-C15 tapes (seven and a half minutes per side), these cassettes have a reputation for high reliability, plus a reasonable write and read capability.

Ross Electronics will tell you more on 01-278 6371.

OFF THE HOOK



Pint-sized Martin McGuinness *reports back on the more interesting queries he's received on the* Y64 *Helpline over the past month.*

There's a chance that none of you were able to get *Alien Attack* to run (Keyboard Kapers, issue 7, *Y64*). Well, there's a simple explanation (grovel, grovel) so phone no more ... we forgot to print the second part of the listing — the Basic loader — without which, there's zilcho chance of anything happening! Anyone whose teeth are still gnashing should send me a large stamped-addressed envelope and I'll be happy to send off the necessary info. Of course, sorry for all the inconvenience.

A Mr Peters called in to ask whether he should buy a reset button. Well, to an extent, the answer to that is just how lazy do you want to be? After all, it doesn't take much energy-sapping effort to switch your computer on and off. Although I don't use one personally, I've tried some on odd occasions; of those, I found the Ducas+ (see Open Access, issue 8, *Y64*) to be among the best. That's mainly because it comes complete with an audio/digital switch (although, on reflection, perhaps it ought to — considering the £16 price-tag!). However, for anyone who fancies something cheaper but just as efficient, I can recommend the neat little number from AS Denby, one which will only set you back the merest £7. For more information, ring the Denby mega-corporation on (0789) 763502, after 5pm.

Eileen O'Connor contacted me, asking for help with the highly addictive game *Impossible Mission* from CBS/Epyx. Having lost her instruction booklet (!), she couldn't cope with the Musical Chess room. Well, for her and anyone else who's finding it hard figuring things out, the magic advice is to try re-playing the notes that come up on-screen, by moving the finger about, in ascending order. That should give you a lift or two! For more details, check out the major review elsewhere in this issue ...

Quite a few of you mega-brains seem to be having a lot of difficulty loading and running programs on your 64s. Of course, it hardly needs me to say that by pressing the Shift-Run/Stop key, the first program on the tape should load and run, provided that it's written in Basic. However, quite a few of you have found that this doesn't always work for home-grown games and programs. So, instead, may I suggest you try:

```
POKE 631,131: POKE 198,1
```

That should do the trick! I use it frequently and, so far, it hasn't let me down. It has the advantage that it can be used from within a program to avoid the problems associated with chaining if variables are not to be retained. But less well known is its use with disk, where the form is:

```
LOAD "Program name",8
```

Once typed in, press Shift-Run/Stop as usual and there you go!

Well, that's all there's space for this month. But remember that if you've any queries — or handy globs of information you want to pass on to other readers — don't hesitate to ring me on the *Y64* Helpline number. See ya next month.

Phone Micro Marty on 01-636 3513 between 10am-1pm and 2-5pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays *only*!

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Portable Prize

One, Ian Etheridge bought two Ariolasoft games — namely *One-On-One* and *Choplifter* — for his two nephews and couldn't resist sending off the Ariolasoft prize draw coupons which came with the games.

And, lo and behold, lucky old Ian ended up with a Commodore SX-64 portable computer worth £800. Nephews James and Anthony McDevitt didn't do badly either — they're getting Ian's old Commodore for keeps this time!

Ariolasoft will be running a prize draw each month until May.

More word on Ariolasoft freebies via 01-834 8506.

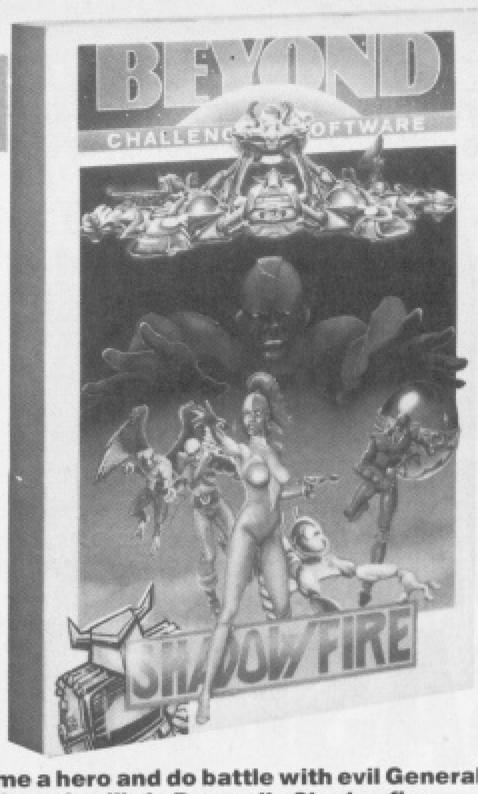


Join the Etheridge family — win an SX-64.

Beyond The Future

Shadowfire is another in the long line of 64 adventure games, this time from Beyond Software. Designed by Denton Designs, the object of this futuristic foray is for players to infiltrate a team of tough heroes and rescue a kidnapped ambassador from the clutches of the cosmos dictator, evil General Zoff (eat your heart out Indiana Jones!).

The whole shebang is claimed to be text-free and features a whole series of screens; even the player's commands are all issued through icons (picture symbols to you!) to speed up the action.



Become a hero and do battle with evil General Zoff — thrills and spills in Beyond's *Shadowfire*.

Beyond is presently considering bids for the US release of *Shadowfire*. But, Yankee version or not, *Shadowfire* will set us Brits back £9.95; further, non-icon, information can be extracted from Clive Bailey on 01-837 2899.

COMPUNET CORNER

Surya presents a monthly round-up of all that's new on Compunet — the dial-up service for 64 users.

First off, apologies to all our regulars who tried without success to download a copy of one of the *Y64* programs, *Joystick Jam*. The program was unavailable for a few days . . . sorry 'bout that! No-one got charged for attempting the download, and the good news is that it's back on the system again. Go for it.

You'll find all our major *Y64* listings are now available on Compunet, and future listings will be added at about the same time each issue goes on sale. Each download will set you back a mere 50p, except for some smaller listings that'll be free! Remember that you can always check the price of any item on Compunet by pressing the F7 key before BUYing.

A little tip for anyone downloading our programs is to SAVE the listing to tape or disk before RUNning; it's easy to forget and you don't want to have to pay for it twice! Also, when you RUN the program, you may need to have the Compunet modem plugged in — this applies only if you've downloaded the program from Compunet; obviously, the modem should not be plugged in if you've typed the listing in.

A couple of complaints often aimed at Compunet are the slow response time (the time taken to carry out a command) and the frustrating wait you'll have actually getting on the system during peak times (6pm to midnight). Needless to say, Compunet has been working on both problems — we've all noticed the increased response times, but I'm told that, although the maximum number of simultaneous users is now about 45, Compunet hopes to double this figure as the number of users increase. Hmm.

For those not already in the know, Compunet now has around 2,000 users, with a claimed 500 new users joining the system each month. And if you want to see what all the fuss is about, have a look in one of the high street chain stores — apparently, there'll be a demonstration program on show. Of course, you could always send Compunet a blank, formatted disk, together with an SAE, and you'll get a free copy of the program to look over in the comfort of your own home. (Don't forget to mark your envelope 'Compunet Demo Program' and address it to: Metford House, 15-18 Clipstone Street, London W1P 7DS.)

Now it's had the chance to study the results of a recent user poll, Compunet has decided not to increase the subscription charge for free uploads and unlimited free mailboxing. You will, however, be offered the option of paying an extra charge in return for free mailboxing.

That way, nobody's forced to pay the extra charge — but anyone who sends a lot of letters on the system can cut down their costs. So get writing . . . we want to hear from you!

Another promised improvement is that the EDITOR will be made available in MAIL. This, if you're not aware, is *very* good news! At the moment, to answer a letter, you have to FINISH mail, select the EDITOR, write the letter, go back into MAIL and finally SEND the reply! Whew.

The glad tidings for datasette users is they'll also be able to SAVE downloaded programs off-line. At present, of course, you've got to SAVE the program to tape before logging off the system. And, in the case of a long program, your connect time and phone charges can really mount up!

On a final note, we're now beginning to receive a fair number of Courier letters from *Y64* readers via Compunet. Nice to hear from you all! Sorry that we're not able to reply to these immediately — nevertheless they are much appreciated, and the most interesting ones will be printed either here or in Missives in future issues. Watch this space!

Editor Roger Munford; **Art Editor** Jimmy Egerton; **Production Editor** Teresa Maughan; **Art Assistant** Steve Broadhurst; **Editorial Assistant** Martin McGuinness; **Editorial Consultant** Chris Palmer; **Contributors** Andrew Bennett, Jamie Clyde, Craig Rawstron, Chris Palmer, Surya, Dougie Bern, Steve Cooke, Pete Connor, Steve Malone, Jimmy Egerton, Sue Denham, Steve Broadhurst, Penny Page, Teresa Maughan, Martin McGuinness; **Advertisement Manager** Alan Towler; **Advertisement Executive** Penny Rouch; **Production Manager** Sonia Hunt; **Group Art Director** Perry Neville; **Publisher** Stephen England; **Published by** Sportscene Specialist Press Ltd, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. **Telephone** (all departments) 01-631 1433; **Telex** 8954139 BunchG. Company registered in England; **Typesetting** Carlinpoint, London; **Reproduction** Latent Image Ltd, London; **Printed by** Chase Web Offset, St Austell, Cornwall; **Distribution** Seymour Press, 334 Brixton Road, London SW9. Telephone 01-733 4444. **Your 64** is a monthly publication.

Something mega's happening to the Commodore 64's Basic ... and we're going to let you in on the ground floor! Treat your 64 to 30 new commands and save up to £2 into the bargain. Interested? You should be ...

Y64 MEGA BASIC

▶ We all know the Commodore's 64's a powerful computer — it's got brilliant colours and high resolution graphics to name but two of its fine features — but is the on-board Basic good enough to put you properly in the driving seat?

Y64 MegaBasic is a little piece of machine code magic that'll remedy this situation and, as an exclusive offer to all *Y64* readers, you can get hold of this wondrous program on cassette at an incredible £2 off before it hits the high streets! On general sale, the book — *Y64 MegaBasic* for the Commodore 64 — will retail at £4.99 ... yet here and now, you can save £1 and buy it for just £3.99. Of course, if you're breaking into a sweat at the thought of typing in all that code, why not save yourself £2 and buy this 64-page book and the cassette version of *Y64 MegaBasic* for just £7.95.

All you have to do is fill in the coupon, enclose a cheque made out to '*Y64 MegaBasic* Offer' for the goods ordered, and send it off to *Y64 MegaBasic* Offer, 9-11 Kensington High Street, London W8 5NP. Go on, treat yourself and your 64 — order *Y64 MegaBasic* today!

30 NEW COMMANDS

Y64 MegaBasic's New Commands

Basic Utilities	
BACKUP	Copies most Basic/machine code programs to tape or disc.
SLOW	Slows the computer down.
FIX	Sorts out most load errors, and resurrects 'bad' programs.
DIR	Brings up a directory of a disk.
KILL	Turns the Mega-64 off and on, without the power switch.
EXIT	Switches *Y64 MegaBasic* off.
Programming Aids	
OLD	Restores a program that's just been NEWed.
PAUSE	Halts a listing temporarily.
RENUMBER	Alters not only the line numbers, but the GOTOs and GOSUBs that reference those lines.
REPEAT	Causes all the Mega-64's keys to auto-repeat.
RSTRIP	Removes all the REMs from a program.
SSTRIP	Removes all unnecessary spaces from a Basic program.
Graphics Control	
INK	Sets the colour of the cursor.
BORDER	Sets the colour of the border.
PAPER	Sets the colour of the foreground.
CLS	Clears the screen.
CURSOR	Places the cursor anywhere on-screen.
HIRES	Selects a high resolution screen.
TEXT	Selects the text screen.
CLG	Clears the graphics screen.
BCOL	Sets the background colour in HIRES mode.
SET	Places a dot on the HIRES screen.
GCOL	Selects the colour of set points on the HIRES screen.
RESET	Resets any point on the HIRES screen.
SWITCH	Reverses a point on the HIRES screen.
DRAW	Draws lines on the HIRES screen.
REDRAW	Resets a line of dots on-screen.
SWDRAW	Switches the points into a line.
Adding Commands	
ADCOM	Allows you to add commands of your own making.
HELP	Provides an on-screen menu of *Y64 MegaBasic* commands available, and the number of bytes left for you to use for your own commands.

Y64 MEGABASIC PRIORITY ORDER FORM

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Using scissors to cut this coupon may prove hazardous to this issue's health. Why not use a photocopy instead?

Currah Speech 64

Speech Synthesizer

The Currah Speech 64 synthesizer and powerful amplifier uses the popular SP/0256-AL2 speech chip and has an almost infinite vocabulary. It has a text-to-speech interpreter for ease of speech output creation. Everything you wish to be spoken is entered in normal English, without special control codes or characters, it is therefore extremely easy to use. The voicing of the words is completely user transparent and the computer can carry on its normal running of a program while the speech chip is talking.

Speech Synthesis

The Commodore 64 speech synthesis utilises parts of the spoken word known as allophones. These are actual sounds that go to make up speech. The SP/0256-AL2 allophone speech synthesis technique provides the ability to synthesize an almost unlimited vocabulary. Fifty-nine discrete speech sounds (allophones) and five pauses are stored in the speech chip's internal ROM.



Text to Speech

Although there are only 26 letters in the alphabet, letters have a totally different sound when used in different words. For example, the 'a' in Hay is much longer and softer than in Hat. When you speak you automatically make adjustments because you know how a word should sound. Not quite so easy with a computer.

The 8K byte Read Only Memory contains all the instructions necessary for the SPEECH 64 to perform all of its more advanced functions including *Key Voicing * Text to speech conversion * Operating system. Having all the software on ROM means that Speech 64 is ready to use as soon as the computer is switched on. Unlike RAM, ROM is non-volatile, it retains the information inside even when the power is turned off.

The 500 gate 'Semi-custom' chip was developed in close co-operation with General Instrument Microelectronics and looks after all the hardware functions ensuring that the SPEECH 64 and your computer communicate properly.

Output via the T.V.

Analogue components together perform the functions of turning the speech output from the SP/0256-AL2 into audio level signals that can be fed into the C64 for output to the TV. They filter out the undesirable low and high frequency signals in the speech output and also amplify the signal to a suitable level.

New Basic Commands

There are 5 new Basic Commands which control all the functions of the interface. Making the Synthesizer very easy to use. You can even choose from a high or low voice and individual allophones can be 'intoned' to add character. Or use the synthesizer to create voice like sound affects.

```
10 SAY "HELLO"
```

The above is an example of the Syntax for entering speech into the computer and shows how simple it is to use.

The instruction book gives comprehensive details and examples of how to use the interface both from machine code and basic.

How to Order

The Currah Speech 64 costs only £29.95. You can obtain your synthesizer through any good computer store or by completing the order form and returning it to:

dk'tronics Limited, Shire Hill, Saffron Walden, Essex. OR by telephone quoting your Barclaycard or Access number. Orders normally despatched within 24 hours.

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MISSIVES

Y64 invites you to air your views on all things 64: funnies, straights, anguished pleas for help. All published letters are rewarded with a brand new game and book, and the author of the star letter will also receive a free one year subscription to the mag. Write to Y64 Missives, *14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE.*

The Protection Racket

I bought my Commodore 64 about four months ago, but I've already come up against what for me is a major stumbling block.

I recently started to write small programs and games, but cannot work out how to stop my friends getting the listing up again. I've got the programs to run when you hit Shift and Run/Stop, but when I type in 'LOAD' it leaves the listing wide open.

How do I incorporate a debugging code to hide the listing in Basic and machine code, help please!

Paul, Lowestoft, Suffolk

With friends like yours, Paul, who needs software pirates? On a more serious note, though, we'll be taking a look at protecting your own software in the next issue — look out for it! Ed

Cross Lines!

Whilst we at Micronet enjoyed reading the 'Battle of the Networks' feature in issue 7, *Y64*, we know that one of the major considerations about going on-line is that of running costs — particularly the dread of higher telephone bills.

For that reason, we feel that a main difference between Micronet and Compunet is the availability of local phone access — this means that (for 97 per cent of UK phone users) using Micronet after 6pm weekdays and at weekends, the costs are only around 40 pence for a whole hour. Without this facility, the phone costs over a year could be alarmingly high.

Secondly, electronic mail on Micronet is quick, simple and efficient, although you may need to quickly check the recipient's mail box number in our mailbox directory. Critically, it is *free* to send mailboxes on Micronet (unlike Compunet) and there's a choice of 50,000 users to send mailboxes to.

Finally, Micronet's user interaction is not at all limited when you consider the highly popular Chatline service — offering uncensored public conversation facilities. Your message appears within 30 seconds of typing it out on your keyboard.

We feel that these three points are important considerations for micro users with limited budgets.

Ian Rock, Marketing Manager, Micronet 800

Well, it seems as though the marketing department of Micronet 800 like their product. What do you think of Micronet 800 or it's arch-rival Compunet? Ed.

Spread The Word

This is just a short note by way of thanks to the 64 Software Centre of London. I rang them on Thursday, 14th February, for advice on a spreadsheet. They recommended several, and I ordered *Practicalc* on cassette. The product was in my hands on Friday!

I subsequently rang for some technical advice, which they provided, and were generally very helpful and well informed. Such good service must deserve a mention?

C Sudder, Willington, Crook, Co Durham

Well, Mr Sudder, it's nice to hear that there's some good service to be had out there on the high streets. If you've had some happy experiences (or even some really duff treatment), tell other Y64 readers through Missives — you know it makes sense! Ed.

Upgrade? No Way!

I couldn't agree more with PW Nichols (Missives, issue 7 *Y64*). I for one would love to buy a chip upgrade for my 64 ... just so long as it doesn't impose too much on the memory map. (When I've got *Simon's Basic* up and running, I lose 10K of the available memory — that's just a little too much to bear!)

Quite honestly, I feel a bit cheated when another micro comes out with what appears to be a better Basic, and the 64 ends up being more or less forgotten. One thing I'm certain of is, that I'm not going to buy another new micro just to get a better version of Basic ... even if it has got a wordprocessor and so on already built-in!

On a more personal note, I'd like to know more about the memory map of the 64. I know that the user port provides an eight bit port which is quite easy to access, but I'd like to access eight ports! Is there any room in the $D000 to $E000 range of addresses to decode for eight ports? Will I conflict with anything else? Also, is there a book which gives listings of the 64's memory map.

Finally, is my little boy the youngest micro user around? He is three and a half years old and already he can type in some Basic commands without my help.

ARG Bradley, Bicester, Oxford

The best text we could recommend is the Commodore 64 Programmer's Reference Guide, published by Commodore Business Machines and Howard W Sams & Co. It's priced at a pretty hefty £14.95, but it should have all the answers you're looking for. Of course, if any Y64 readers have any help to offer Mr Bradley, don't keep us in suspense, write in now! Ed.

Dearly Beloved...

We would appreciate your mentioning the newly formed Christian Micro Users Association. We hope to link together a large number of Christian micro users and also promote the use of micros in church activities.

There is not only a great need to discover the few individuals and companies producing Christian software, but also to share ideas of the many people using micros in their church related activities.

Anyone who sends a large SAE to: Christian Micro Users Association, c/o 6 Walkley Street, Sheffield S6 3RG, will receive further details and a sample magazine.

PA Clark, Sheffield

Amen. Ed.

Colour by Numbers

I recently returned to the UK after living in the United States where I (unfortunately!) purchased a Texas Instruments computer. The only *good* thing I did while I was out there was to also buy a TI colour monitor.

However, since returning I've splashed out on a CBM 64, only to find that I'm unable to get colour on the monitor — all it gives are black and white pictures once switched over to the 64. I've tried all sorts of different combinations of input. Can you suggest something more fundamental please?

Thomas Melvin, Kingswood, Surrey

Well, Thomas, I'm surprised that you're actually receiving a picture, even if it is black and white! Commodore computers have composite video, while Texas computers have RGB. Being American, your Texas monitor probably clocks at 50 Hz whereas it would need to be 60 Hz to get colour. I'm afraid that there's no way you could receive colour on your monitor. However, if you're using your 64 for programming, black and white should be sufficient. And, if you want to play games, then I'd suggest that you plug your computer into an ordinary TV set. Ed.

Game For A Laugh

STAR LETTER

I changed my computer from a Spectrum to a Commodore, mainly because I wanted to use it as a *computer* and not just a games machine.

I must admit that the difference is remarkable ... with sprite graphics, superb sound and colour where could I go wrong? Well, the answer is nowhere as far as games are concerned, most are available at very reasonable prices with more than competent loaders. However, as soon as I came to examine more serious software, such as wordprocessors, databases and assemblers, the prices became astronomical!

For someone at school, these exceptional prices are just too much. I would have thought that as a more business-style computer, this type of software would be cheaper. Is the Commodore 64 turning into a games-only machine?

Richard Louves, Pitton, Kent

Indeed the prices are a bit higher for serious software — but this is often a reflection of the sales of the product. There are hundreds of games around, and thus the pricing is much more competitive — utilities and business software appeals to a smaller market and their price reflects this. It would be interesting to hear from some manufacturers on this point (hint, hint). Otherwise, have you considered Audiogenic's Home Office — at £9, it seems pretty good value. Ed.

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MISSIVES

Mightier Than The Sword?

With regards to your article on wordprocessors (issue 7, *Y64*) you appear to have got your illustrations mixed up a bit. The pics of *Dataview* and *Home Office* seem to be reversed. I noticed this having tried them both at some time or another!

I myself use *Easyscript*, which I'm pleased to see was given the best report by yourselves. And I must agree with you 100 per cent — it's a fantastic system to use and very, very versatile.

Donald Jeffs, Poole, Dorset

Let's hear what the rest of you think of your wordprocessors? Perhaps there are some we missed out in our review? Ed.

An Open And Shut Case?

I am the proud owner of *Monroe Manor* by Severn Software and I've been stuck for months trying to open the wardrobe. All I get is the reply 'It seems to be stuck'.

Please, have you got any ideas on how to get past this point as it's driving me and my family crazy. We've tried absolutely everything we can think of to get it open.

Neil Aikman, Bromley, Kent

Well, it's easy really ... with a little bit of help from Severn Software! First, pick up the brass key, and use it to open the wardrobe door from the outside only! Then leave it — you'll come back to it later from the other side ... but this time you'll be able to open the door. If you've got any other problems with adventures, write into the Y64 Adventure Helpline. Ed.

Beginner's Luck?

Please can you tell me how to relocate the character set in the CBM 64 ROM into RAM and once in RAM, how to get the pointer to point at it. I have looked at every chapter in the handbook, but cannot find out how to do it.

Also, I must side with JR Strang — Missives, issue 6, *Y64* — because the 64 is perfectly easy to use and understand. I've only had mine two weeks, after owning a Spectrum, and I can already use the Commodore's sprite and sound capabilities which I'm told is the hardest part.

Philip Hamilton, Bolton, Manchester

The best thing we can suggest is that you invest in a copy of the Programmer's Reference Guide and check out pages 110-114, where you'll be given a full program to do exactly what you have in mind. Of course, if any of our readers can come to Philip's aid ... Ed.

Codebusters!

Please could you tell me if there are any codes or routines that would enable me to have unlimited lives when I'm playing Software Projects' *Manic Miner* or any other similar arcade games.

I'd be very grateful if you print any such routines — I'm sure other *Y64* readers would be interested in this.

Christopher Turner, Ilkley, West Yorkshire.

I'm sure our readers would be interested too, Christopher. So, listen up ... if there's anyone out there who reckons themselves as a codebuster, write to me here at Your 64 and tell us all about it. All hacking correspondence should be sent under plain wrapper, no questions asked, etc, etc. Ed.

Spectrum Minus?

After reading Mrs Nellie Maynard's letter (issue 4, *Y64*) I thought I should put pen to paper in the 64's defence.

Mrs Maynard criticises the complexity of the 64's Basic and praises the Spectrum's simplicity. Hah! She's obviously never had to try and load a large game into the Spectrum — it's a real hit and miss affair. You'd also be wise to exterminate yourself fairly early on in the game, just so that you could place the Spectrum into the freezer to cool down a bit before you attempt the next level!

Long live the 64!

Darren Senior, Perth, Australia

And that's the last we'll hear on that matter ... unless you want to give some reasons for liking the 64 so much. Why not back up your comments with a program you've written, or tell us how many points you've notched up on a particular game, or which peripherals you'd recommend, and so on ... Ed.

Y64 TOP TEN CLASSICS





Derek Cohen 6 goals (5th level)

Andrew Stark 4 goals (4th level)

Steve Calwell 3 goals (2nd level)

1 INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL COMMODORE

2 GHOSTBUSTERS ACTIVISION





Jimmy Egerton 16,500

Penny Rouch 12,200

Alan Towler 10,500





Kevin Cox 5,400

Joe Harrower 3,287

Wendy Smith 2,326

3 DALEY THOMPSON'S DECATHLON OCEAN

4 BEACH HEAD US GOLD





Steve Broadhurst 58,000

Roger Willis 37,000

Beth Ford 25,000





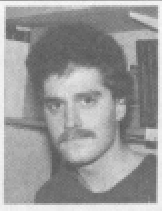
Chris Dabbs 94,300

Pete Connor 30,500

Trevor Emmanus 19,000

5 RAID OVER MOSCOW US GOLD

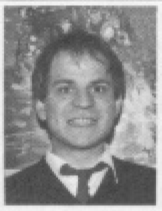
6 IMPOSSIBLE MISSION CBS/EPYX


Mike Leaman 9,000

Steve Shreyas 8,000

Suzie Matthews 3,600


Steve Malone 7 World Records

Jerry Lewis 5 World Records

Claudia Jeffries 3 World Records

7 SUMMER GAMES QUICKSILVA/EPYX

8 JET SET WILLY SOFTWARE PROJECTS

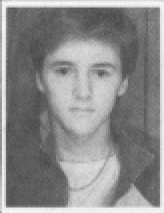
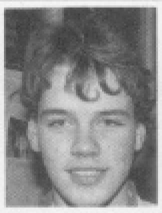
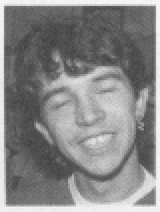




Roger Munford 24 Pieces Collected

Teresa Maughan 16 Pieces Collected

Louise Cook 12 Pieces Collected

Craig Rawstron 10,280

Martin McGuinness 10,240

Peter Shaw 9,650

9 DECATHLON ACTIVISION

10 MANIC MINER SOFTWARE PROJECTS





Julian Dorr 8,500

David Baskerville 6,300

John Kay 3,000

Y64 TOP TEN HOT SHOTS

1. **BRUCE LEE** US GOLD
2. **STAFF OF KARNATH** ULTIMATE
3. **TAPPER** US GOLD
4. **BC'S QUEST FOR TIRES** SOFTWARE PROJECTS
5. **SPY VS SPY** BEYOND SOFTWARE
6. **FIGHTER PILOT** DIGITAL INTEGRATION
7. **FRAK!** AARDVARK
8. **COMBAT LEADER** US GOLD
9. **TAZZ!** BUBBLE BUS SOFTWARE
10. **HUNCHBACK II** OCEAN

WHO DARES WINS!

We're on the look-out for high-scoring games players — we want to make you famous! Carry on reading if you fancy being an official Y64 games consultant ....

Once again, it's all change here at *Y64* — instead of one Top 20, we've got two Top 10s, and we're going to need your help for the both of them!

It's A Classic!

You'll see in our top chart, we've listed your Top 10 all-time favourite games and, for each title, there's a photo of each of our resident top scorers. Hah! Pretty pathetic scores you may think ... well, that's up to you. All you've got to do to knock our *Y64* 'special guest' high scores out of the chart is to tell us your highest score with a particular game and send us a passport-sized black-and-white photo of yourself!

The games that go to make up our Top 10 classics are compiled from your votes ... so, don't just tell us which games you've got high scores on, fill in all five of your favourites. Got that? Good.

If you're going for the high scores, you must get them verified by an independent witness (who will need to sign the form before you send it to us). Of course, you could try and 'fix' the chart by fiddling your scores, but it'll probably be noticed anyway. And, if you do send in one of the two highest scores, you run the risk of being invited up to the *Y64* offices to prove your skill.

Losing could be a fairly humiliating affair if you can't play the game properly ... if it weren't for the software goodies you'll be walking away with. But winning is well worth the risk ... as you'll be elevated to the position of an official *Y64* games consultant; we'll be looking to this growing body of crack games players to 'second opinion' our major games reviews in future issues.

Bubbling Under ...

You've probably noticed our second chart by now ... the *Y64* Top 10 Hot Shots. This chart will reflect not only the packages that you've just bought, but the ones you're saving up to buy over the next month; we'd even be interested to know of the games you're looking forward tc being released!

Here at *Y64*, you can almost feel the ripple of cynacism that flies round the editiorial office each time we see a package zoom up the chart because it's selling so well, only to find out that it's not even available in the shops yet! This month's chart is based on the newest packages you voted for over the last four weeks — if you don't agree with it, write in and tell us.

And just to get you going, there'll be prizes of five pieces of software for the first three coupons pulled out of the Editor's hat. Make this chart reflect what's really happening out there ... vote now!

Your 64 CHART CHALLENGE

My top five all-time favourite games are:	My top scores are*:	The next games that I'm getting hold of are:
1	1	1 ....
2	2	2 ....
3	3	3 ....
4	4	4 ....
5	5	5 ....

*Please specify the level of difficulty.

Complete this coupon (or a photocopy of same) and send it to **Y64 Chart Challenge, *Your 64*, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Make sure you include a B&W passport photo of yourself if you're going for the high scores!**

Independent Witness

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

Postcode ....

And This Is Who I Am:

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

Postcode ....

Stick your photograph here if you are going for the High Scores Chart

***MAGAZINE HEALTH WARNING** Using scissors on this page may impair the overall health of this magazine — please use a photocopy instead.*

SOFT WARES

Save £££s off selected software titles in this exclusive offer for all Y64 readers. Go for it ...

The price of commercial games software is always on the increase ... unless you take advantage of this special offer and save yourself a fortune. Each month, we'll be listing a number of 'pocket-money specials' that'll include many of the latest and greatest games around — and you can order as many or as few as you want!

SAVE MONEY WITH Y64

Complete this coupon (or a photocopy of same) and send it off to *Y64* Soft Wares, *Your 64*, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

	R.R.P.	OUR PRICE
☐ Bruce Lee (US Gold) 001	£9.95	**£8.95**
☐ Staff Of Karnath (Ultimate) 002	£9.95	**£8.95**
☐ Tapper (US Gold) 003	£9.95	**£8.95**
☐ BC's Quest For Tires (Software Projects) 004	£9.95	**£8.95**
☐ Spy Vs Spy (Beyond Software) 005	£9.95	**£8.95**
☐ Fighter Pilot (Digital Integration) 006	£9.95	**£8.95**
☐ FRAK! (Aardvark) 007	£8.95	**£7.95**
☐ Combat Leader (US Gold) 008	£14.95	**£12.95**
☐ Tazz! (Bubble Bus) 009	£6.95	**£5.95**
☐ Hunchback II (Ocean) 010	£7.90	**£6.90**
☐ International Football (Commodore) 011	£14.99	**£12.99**
☐ Ghostbusters (Activision) 012	£10.99	**£9.99**
☐ Daley Thompson's Decathlon (Ocean) 013	£7.90	**£6.90**
☐ Beach Head (US Gold) 014	£9.95	**£7.95**
☐ Raid Over Moscow (US Gold) 015	£9.95	**£8.95**
☐ Impossible Mission (CBS/Epyx) 016	£8.95	**£7.95**
☐ Summer Games (Quicksilva/Epyx) 017	£14.95	**£13.95**
☐ Jet Set Willy (Software Projects) 018	£7.95	**£6.95**
☐ Decathlon (Activision) 019	£9.99	**£8.99**
☐ Manic Miner (Software Projects) 020	£7.95	**£6.95**

At these ridiculous prices, how could I resist this exclusive *Y64* offer? I've ticked the games I want to order and enclosed a cheque for £...... made out to Sportscene Specialist Press Ltd.

Please charge my Access/Visa/American Express/Mastercharge

card number* ....
(*Delete as applicable)

Signature ....
(Credit card order cannot be accepted without a signature.)

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Address ....

....

.... Postcode ....

For office use only!

MAGAZINE HEALTH WARNING Using scissors on this page may impair the health of this magazine — please use a photocopy instead!

INTERNATIONAL BASKET BALL

Commodore's newest release International Basketball *looks set to knock* International Football *off the top of the charts.* Jimmy Egerton *and* Penny Page *give you an exclusive sneak preview to see what all the fuss is about ...*

By all accounts basketball is the most played sport in the world and as such Commodore's *International Basketball*, available by the time you read this, looks set to be a very popular package ... if it's as good as it's cracked up to be!

Courting Disaster?

Before you even get a chance to stroll out on-court, you've got to decide whether you're going to be playing by NBA, NCAA or international (Olympic) rules ... if you don't know the various rules of basketball, check 'em out — the 64 plays a mean game and if you're not aware of the rules, you've had it.

On-court, after you've chosen your team's colours and sat through the obligatory 'rah-rah' dancers, the first things you'll notice are the chunky *International Football* characters playing the game. The player you control is the nearest one to the ball, but it's a simple matter to take control of other players. On-screen you see roughly half the basketball court, but the screen scrolls smoothly as play moves from one side to another. Control is a bit tricky to handle to begin with, due to the odd perspective on-screen, but you soon get used to it — more difficult is actually throwing the ball, which requires precise manoeuvering to be successful. Otherwise, you can run all over the court, block other players, run with the ball and throw it at the basket.

There are nine levels of difficulty, but level nine is strictly for professionals only! Like *International Football*, you have the option to play the computer or have a two-player game.

To be critical, one of the first things that comes to mind is that there's only three players on each side, and not the standard five ... which is a bit unusual when you consider the adherance to the official rules of the game of basketball. Also, there are no substitutions; in a real game of basketball, various players have particular skills — defence or attack — and the idea is to substitute tactically at various stages of the game to create advantages. It seems a shame that this aspect of the game has been thrown away.

Overall, though, the game does simulate a good game of basketball — just make sure you're using a good joystick when you're playing.

The players are built up of very chunky graphics, reminiscent of Commodore's *International Football.*

The crowd roar its approval each time a goal is scored, and when the teams file on and off the court.

This is the tunnel through which the players emerge to the roar of the crowd at the beginning of the match; it's also where you'll see the 'token female' personality stroll on at the end to present the prize to the winning team.

Although a realistic simulation of basketball, there are only three players on each team ... rather than the five you'd expect. There are also no substitutes available — which isn't that surprising as all the players seem to exhibit the sama defensive and offensive skills!



When one of your team is in possession of the ball, you'll find his jersey changes colour; for instance, if you're sporting the bright yellow jerseys, the player holding the ball will be resplendant in dark orange colours.

You can select the colour of both sides' jerseys using the F1 key; choosing to play in yellow can prove to be tricky as the jerseys tend to clash with the yellow ball!

If one of your players foul the other side more than three times (or five times, depending on which rules you've selected), your opponents are awarded two free shots at basket; for each successive foul in the same quarter, your team will be penalised with two more free shots.

You can change the player you're controlling by holding down the joystick's fire-button or running the player off-screen. You'll need to perfect some tricky joystick tactics if you're going to try passing the ball around on-court!

The scoreboard also doubles as a message-board, printing up suitable slogans to signal fouls, goals scored and violations. Once a particular message has been flashed up for a few seconds, it reverts back to its role as a scoreboard.

You can throw at your opponent's basket from any distance — indeed, if you're playing to international or NBA rules, you can score three points if you shoot outside the boxed-off area. In general, though, it's best to get as close as you can to the enemy basket before you attempt a throw if you want to be assured of success.

These flags indicate the direction of play for each team.



When your opponents are in possession of the ball, it's very difficult to judge exactly where to place your defender so that he's got a chance of blocking a pass.

At the start of the game, you have the choice of playing to NBA, NCAA or international (Olympic) rules. This determines the layout of the court and whether certain rules apply or not. Confused? You will be!

The ball is made to bounce very realistically, along with a programmed 'boing' each time it hits the floor of the court. It takes some time to sort out the perspective of the ball — especially when you're making long cross-court passes — but you soon get the hang of it.

Throwing in a ball from the sidelines can be a tricky manoeuvre, especially if it's a long throw cross-court. Until you're well-practised, it's best to stick to short throws.

When you're playing to international rules, this figure relates to the 30-second rule (if you don't attempt a shot at the basket within 30 seconds the ball is taken away from you!); if you've elected to play under NBA rules, you play to the 24-second rule. (This area of the scoreboard is blank if you play to NCAA rules.)

Robbing your opponents of the ball is fairly easy — you just have to run at them and suddenly you're in possession. Trouble is, the other side find it just as easy to rob you...

These figures show the time left in each period and the home/away team scores.

There's no referee on-screen in amongst the play — but if there's some trouble brewing after a foul, you'll hear the ref's whistle screaming above the general melee to stop play.



If you're playing the computer, you'll find it a very polite player — its team will rarely foul you. A little bit odd is the way that you can only foul when you have possession of the ball ... hardly a realistic situation.

When one of your players is in possession, you can run him towards the opposing basket dribbling the ball as you go. Bouncing of the basketball is done automatically — all you have to worry about is weaving in and out of the other side's players to get near the net.

You can select one of nine levels of difficulty: level one's dead easy, but you'll have no chance on level nine — it's all you can do to prevent a complete 'whitewash'!

ACTION REPLAY

No. of players · Joystick · Joystick optional · Cass · Disk

Our resident joystick jockies Steve Malone *and* Pete Connor *take a look at the latest games software for the 64.*



Action Replay addicts will notice a slight change this month. Here at *Y64*, we're proud to welcome games supremo Pete Connor to these pages. He'll provide a slightly different perspective to our regular 'man about the arcades' Steve Malone. Months of playing Commodore 64 games on your lonesome can do things to a man's mind ... so, before that happens, we're looking forward to a bit of sanity from Pete!

Just before you jaunt off into the delights of the following pages, can we interest you in a quick look at what didn't quite 'make it' this month. Well, first up, there's a couple of offerings from Jetsoft — *Cavelon II* and *Quari*.

Cavelon II sees you as good ol' Sir Lancelot, out to destroy the wicked wizard. To accomplish this noble quest, you've got to pass through six rooms; to get through one room to another, you've got to collect the eight pieces of the door that are scattered around all over the place. Of course, there's the usual motley collection of nasties to overcome — however, if you manage to pick up Excalibur, you not only become invincible, but you can also fly around, picking up the rest of the pieces. Hmm.

Jetsoft's other offering *Quari*, is based around the old arcade game *Bongo*, and the idea is to avoid various obstacles while travelling along a cave and pick up pieces of treasure. You can't afford to hang about too long as there's a rather weedy looking Tyrannosaurus Rex on your trail. There are 27 obstacles — such as pits, birds and so on — to negotiate, and the cassette insert promises that if you get to the end you 'cage' the monster.

So what's the connection between these games? Well, both include moving nasties that trundle about on more or less preset patterns — which means that once you've got the trick of being in the right place at the right time, your problems are solved. You end up feeling a bit like one of Pavlov's dogs.

Alligata Software also has an entry in the 'haven't-we-met-before?' stakes. *BMX Stunts* is yet another 'pirouette on bikes' sort of game that's becoming very fashionable nowadays. By twidling your joystick you can do 'bunny hops', 'wheelies', 'ramp jumps' and slaloms — golly, what fun! Actually *BMX Stunts* is no better or worse than any of the other 'on your bike' games ... it's just that after the first half dozen one gets a trifle jaded!

And sometimes, beyond getting jaded, one really begins to feel annoyed. Especially with a game such as Alligata's *Rocket Roger*! This must be the umpteenth version of *Jet Pack* that's landed in the *Y64* office! Our hero Roger, is marooned on some godforsaken planet and he's got to collect some crystals to refuel his craft. While all this is going on, there are the usual collection of nasties going through the motions. In mitigation, it must be said that *Rocket Roger* isn't yer usual sort of 'platforms' game, but a sort of scrolling arcade adventure in which you've got to avoid lasers, leap across gaps and so on. Sounds great, eh? Think again!

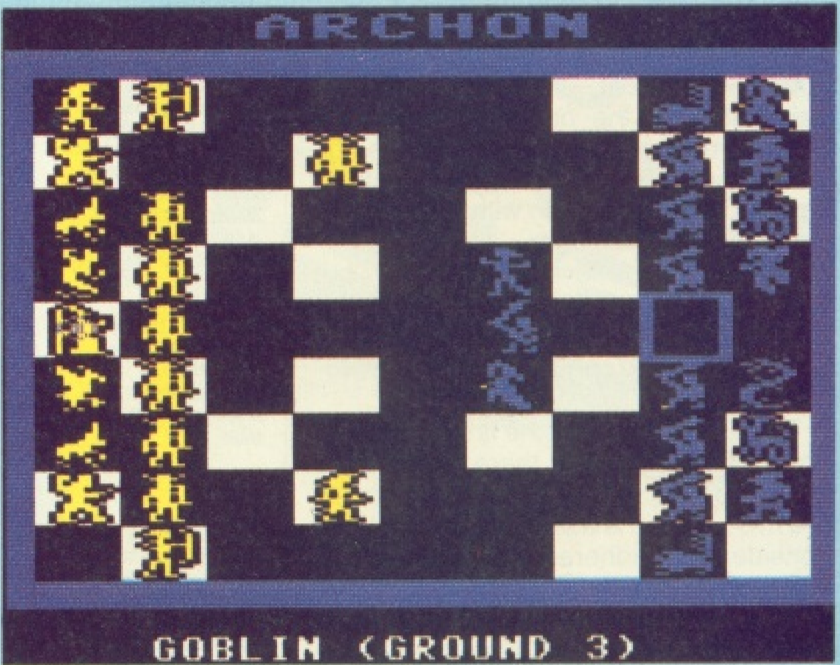
ARCHON
Ariolasoft £14.95 (disk) £11.95 (cassette)

The trouble with strategy games is that they lack what we in the trade call 'a bit of the old adrenaline'. You make your moves and, providing you concentrate enough muscle in the right place at the right time, you win. Of course, if the other side knows what you're up to, there's not a thing you can do about it! The trouble with arcade games, on the other hand, is that you end up being hysterical, zapping everything in sight, wondering how you got into this fix in the first place.

Well, *Archon* is a game where you can plan your strategy, move yourself around for maximum effectiveness and *still* have a barney at the end! The scenario of the game is the eternal battle between light and darkness. On either side a number of different icons are lined up on a nine by nine grid, and they've all got different strengths and move around a bit like chess pieces. The 'Light' forces are made up of such classic 'goodies' as knights, phoenixes and unicorns whilst 'Dark' comes complete with baddies' like trolls, banshees and goblins. Much of the grid squares are coloured black and white as on a chess board, but the rest of the squares change through a range of colours from black to white and back again. The forces of light are stronger on the lighter squares and *vice versa* for darkness. Got that? Good.

The idea of the game is to capture the five power points on the screen. And to do this, you've not only got to get there, but you've also got to smash up any enemy pieces that happen to be there and see off any others that might happen along. As soon as an icon lands on a square that's already occupied, that's when the fun begins! The screen suddenly transforms to a close-up plan view of the square with the rival pieces at opposite ends. Then, depending on what powers they have, you zap, shoot, scream or chuck boulders at the enemy until one or other of the sprites is destroyed.

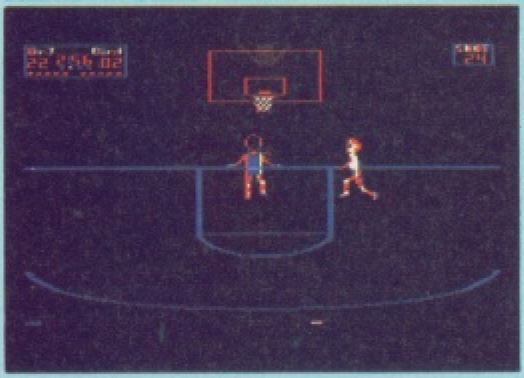
Archon's rather like a game of _Chess_; each piece has its own pre-defined behaviour pattern and you adjust your strategy accordingly. If you land one of your pieces on a square already occupied by the enemy, the battle takes place arcade-style.



The game is further complicated by the fact that the two kingpins on each side — the wizard and the sorceress — can chuck magic spells around that teleport other pieces, bring them back from the dead or summon elementals.

But, here's a warning — this game is difficult. After a few games, you *do* get the hang of the thing, and, with a bit of strategy, you can even beat the arcade-type 'hand-to-hand' fights! *Archon* is also highly addictive!

ONE ON ONE
Ariolasoft £9.95



Steve Having converted Blighty to the dubious practise of Gridiron football, those guys from across the Atlantic now appear to be softening us up towards basketball and the opening shot is *One On One*.

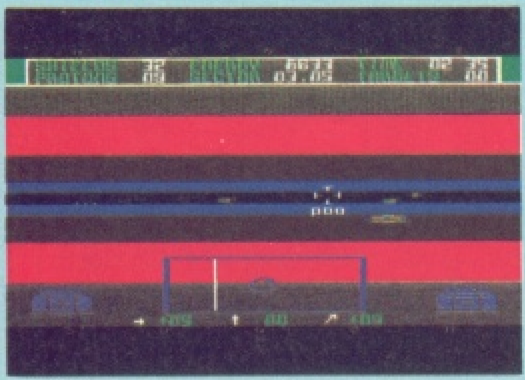
The game is basically a two-player basketball simulation (you against the computer or a friend) and the idea's to stick the ball in the basket more often than the other chap. Fouling is treated with the respect it deserves, and running into your opponent and kicking him is not allowed!

The screen display shows one half of a basketball court with two players lined up in the centre, one of which has already snaffled the ball. Assuming you've got the ball, a few demonstrations of fancy footwork should get you past your opponent, giving you a clear shot at the basket. Throwing the ball is done by pressing the fire button; the longer you hold the button down the harder your shot. I found it useful to shoot immediately and providing you haven't moved and you hold the fire button down for long enough, two times out of three, you've scored.

Despite the fact that my critical self thought *One On One* was daft, it's well addictive and kept me coming back for more. Just goes to show I'm a bit of a basket case I suppose!

Pete I suppose this is the only chance midgets like me will have to play top class basketball. I can't say I was too succesful: no matter which player I chose to be, the computer was always that little bit better. Still, it's an enjoyable and very classy program and, as a two-player game, should be very exciting.

SENTINEL
Synsoft £9.95



Steve There are many things on which Jeff Minter and I don't see eye to eye. However, there's one thing that we'll both agree on. And that's that Atari's *Star Raiders* is the best game ever. Period. However, it seems that some programmers consider re-writing *Star Raiders* for the 64 to be something of a holy grail. And, the latest in a long line of 'pig's ears' is *Sentinel*. The basic *Star Raiders* set up, is that the galaxy is divided up into grid sectors, in which you'll come across the architypal alien spacecraft. The idea is to move around the sectors and blast the aliens before they sneak up and surround one of your star bases; star bases, by the way, are where you refuel and repair yourself after a good battle. Anyway, the whole scenario's been slavishly copied in *Sentinel*, except that this time the aliens aren't after your bases, but your planet, and *they* have star bases which *you* can destroy. Wow!

What no-one seems to understand is that what made *Star Raiders* so good wasn't the script (which to be honest was pinched from the old *Star Trek* strategy game anyway) but the coding. The dogfights (to use a hackneyed term) were superb. There hasn't been a better version of *Star Raiders* since the original, and that's considering *Sentinel* in the race!

Pete This ones' got all the ingredients of a classic 3D 'shoot-'em-up' — terrific noise, clear graphics, and you'll get a frantic blast as you try to get those mean Garganitors. I particularly enjoyed the variety of missiles and alien ships, even if I did sometimes find it hard to locate the creeps. Old-fashioned, perhaps but still great fun.

GRYPHON
Quicksilva £7.95



Steve Hot off the Quicksilva production line is *Gryphon* — a sort of fairy tale 'shoot-'em-up'. Apparently, Gryphon (a griffin) wakes up one morning to find that his stack of gold is in danger of being swiped by the Id monsters ... to the point where he decides to move his gold, one bar at a time to his nest.

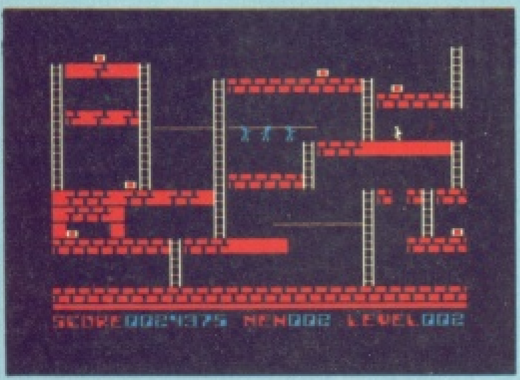
To pick up the gold you move the Gryphon to the bottom-left of the screen where a nice shiny object appears in your mouth. Then, after a good run-up, you launch yourself into the air. Meanwhile, the Id monsters (looking suspiciously like Casper the Ghost) swarm around; naturally, if the ghosts get near our feathered friend, you've got a stiff Gryphon on your hands.

After travelling across country, avoiding obstacles and Ids on the way, you drop your gold into a tunnel containing poisonous water. After a few journeys, the gold bars form stepping stones to the other side of the tunnel and once through, the background scenery changes and the whole business starts again.

Gryphon is a typical Quicksilva game. That's to say, the background graphics and the foreground sprites are detailed and imaginative, and the plot is a bit thin. Basically a good old-fashioned *Defender*-type 'shoot-'em-up'! 'Nuff said ...

Pete Superb graphics, as usual, from Crowther — chunky and colourful, with imaginative use of backgrounds. And the other Crowther trademark — super-smooth scrolling — is there too. The game's great fun to play, even if didn't demand too much of what little grey matter I've got left. Joystick control can be a little awkward.

LODE RUNNER
Ariolasoft £8.95



Pete Brøderbund's game was a huge hit in the States a couple of years ago, and should do very well now it's eventually been released. It might look a little dated over here, but nowadays it's still fun-packed and frenetic.

The scenario is the usual load of old tosh — 'Galactic commando ... repressive Bungeling Empire ... stolen a fortune ... peace-loving people ...' — but you needn't bother with that! The game is very similar to those old *Monsters* programs that did the rounds a couple of years ago; run up and down ladders, dig holes to trap the monsters and then collect the treasure.

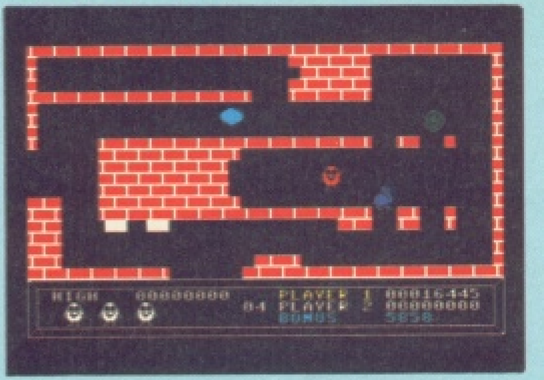
However, what makes *Lode Runner* such a superior exponent of this theme is, even more than its high speed, the huge number of screens; the blurb claims 'over 150 different screens and puzzles' and I'm certainly not going to dispute it! Although all the screens are comprised of bricks, ladders, ropes and holes they're arranged in a very tricky way — I've yet to find the same patterns repeated.

The game doesn't have superb graphics or sound, but it's very compulsive, fast and it'll keep you at it by the fiendish simplicity of its construction. An added pleasure is that you can also re-design the screens should you ever grow bored with the 150 the game already has to offer.

Steve The Brøderbund has produced a whole stack of good-looking games of late, and this one's well up to scratch. *Lode Runner* is a fast and furious 'platforms and ladders' game that leaves most of its competitors standing. The coding's great, and so is the action — why can't all games be like this?

ACTION REPLAY

PARKY AND THE YELLOW SUBMARINE
Cheetahsoft £6.95



Pete In this game you've got the rather doubtful pleasure of controlling Parky, the 'famous South Atlantic penguin'. Big in the Falklands perhaps, but not exactly a superstar over here!

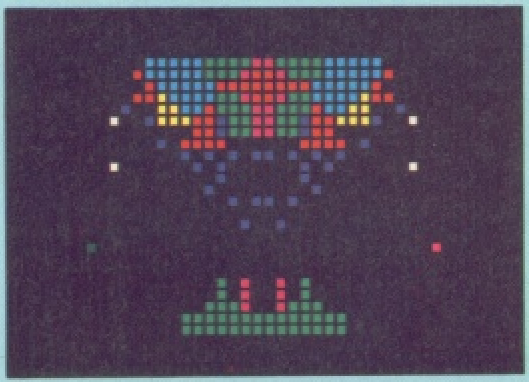
This is a pretty good game in the *Blagger/Manic Miner* mould — even if Parky does look more like an egg than a chocolate biscuit. But enough of this animal prejudice and on with the game. Parky's task is to find his brother, Perry, who's lost in an 'endless maze of subterranean caverns'. Well, it's not quite endless, because the blurb then goes on to tell us there are just 91 caverns — but it's pretty good!

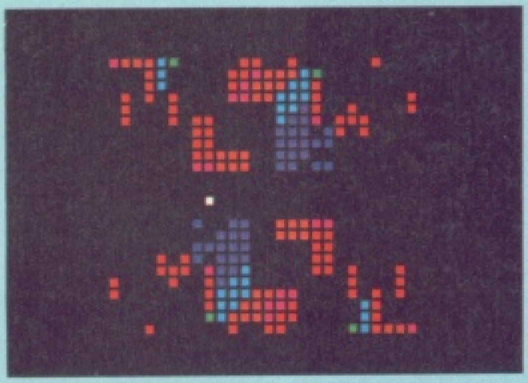
Each cavern is made of brick and filled with just the kind of items you'd expect to find in a game like this — whirling thingies, chomping Pac-man, moving barriers, hungry sharks and so on. You can't touch the walls and, to keep up your energy, you have to eat lots of fish and chips. No wonder Parky's so fat! You have to find all three parts of a sub to win.

It's not terribly original, but it is well done — *Parky and the Yellow Submarine* is big, difficult and high in the compulsive frustration ratings!

Steve To begin with Parky is supposed to be a penguin — to me he looks more like a potato! Parky stars in one of those ludicrous little games in which you have to manoeuvre past a number of obstacles. The annoying thing about this sort of game is that it's not brains or reflexes that count, it's just your timing. And once you've sussed out what everything's doing, and when, you just get bored. *Parky and The Yellow Submarine* is neither perky or playworthy, just pretty pointless.

PSYCHEDELIA
Llamasoft £7.50





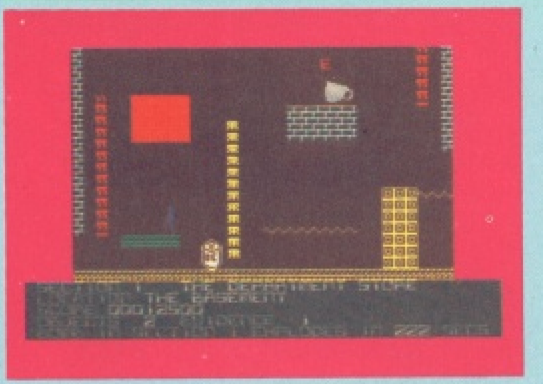
Pete Minter says 'Freak out', and you probably will once you've fiddled around with *Psychedelia* for a bit. It certainly makes a change from spitting llamas anyway!

The program — you can't really call it a game — is essentially a light synthesiser. As Jeff suggests, the best thing to do is to load it up, crank up your favourite sounds on the stereo and just experiment.

Psychedelia has a huge range of options (you can even have heart-shaped pixels) enough to make it run for a long, long time. Far out, Jeff.

Steve If you've ever wondered what Jeff Minter does in his spare time, this must be it! In this 'game' you twiddle your joystick in time to music, creating all sorts of fireworks on-screen; you can then play it all back while listening to some 'far out' music. Strange, it didn't seem to go with the *Sex Pistols!* Unless your idea of a good time is transforming your brain into rainbow custard, I wouldn't bother.

AUTOMAN
Bug-Byte £9.95



Steve This is yet another of those games that's slavishly plodding in the slipstream of an already-successful TV show. Still, *Ghostbusters* was very good, *Automan's* packaging looks OK and Bug-Byte *is* a pretty big company — we should be on to a winner!

We are not. Words cannot express how awful this game is. The plot so far is that the 'Lizzard' has planted a series of bombs in various parts of the city and you, as Automan, must go through the city collecting evidence to convict this character and defuse the bombs.

All well and good, but the game itself is terrible — you get to move a matchstick man around a matchstick city avoiding dumb sprites. Should you have the misfortune to run into a 'baddie', you don't even die ... you just use up precious time getting re-charged.

Automan is a very easy game, but for one thing — the programming is so naff, you spend ages trying to get on to a stairway or lift to the point that you give up and wander off, only to be told on-screen that you're now 'on the correct platform'. It really is that bad!

The game is attractively packaged and does have a 'name' to sell ... but, to be quite honest, it's worse than the TV series and, for me, that's serious!

Pete A great disappointment. Instead of the futuristic and exciting action I was expecting, all there is is a tedious mixture of a platform game muddled up with an arcade adventure. Rotten graphics, lousy noise and a surfeit of Minterish influences (hamsters, Ying-Yang symbols and the like), *Automan* must have been written on auto-pilot!

SEASIDE SPECIAL
Tasket £9.95 (disk) £6.90 (cassette)



Steve I'd like to begin by asking you a question. Do you ever feel guilty about the Earth's scarce resources and the plastic, metal and electricity, that's gone into constructing that computer you're using? Don't you feel that you ought to give it all up and join GreenPeace! Well, never fear 'cause *Seaside Special*'s here ...

Evil Politikians (politicians, geddit!) are dumping nuclear waste into the sea, producing radioactive seaweed. Environmentally conscious Radium Rodney has decided to collect all the seaweed as it's washed up on the shore and dump it at a more suitable home ... No. 10, Downing Street. The trouble is, Rodney has problems. First up, there's the guards that patrol the beach, but worse, the nuclear waste has produced mutant jellyfish and crabs which nip to kill! Oh, and did I mention the tide was coming in as well? Most of the time, Rodney stays out of trouble as long as he doesn't keep to the same levels as the guards (that can only shoot horizontally) and dodges the mutants. If ol' Rodders gets stuck in a corner, don't panic, just get him to bung a blob of seaweed at the approaching nasties!

Seaside Special is a mildly diverting little runaround. The joystick control is very good, and the graphics are very pleasant ...

Pete Very funny and *very* enjoyable. The graphics are so good you could almost imagine yourself on the beach at Bridlington. The action started off gently enough, but is soon got pretty hectic as those nasty nipping crabs came crawling in. And what a rare and satisfying pleasure it is to throw seaweed in the faces of the government!



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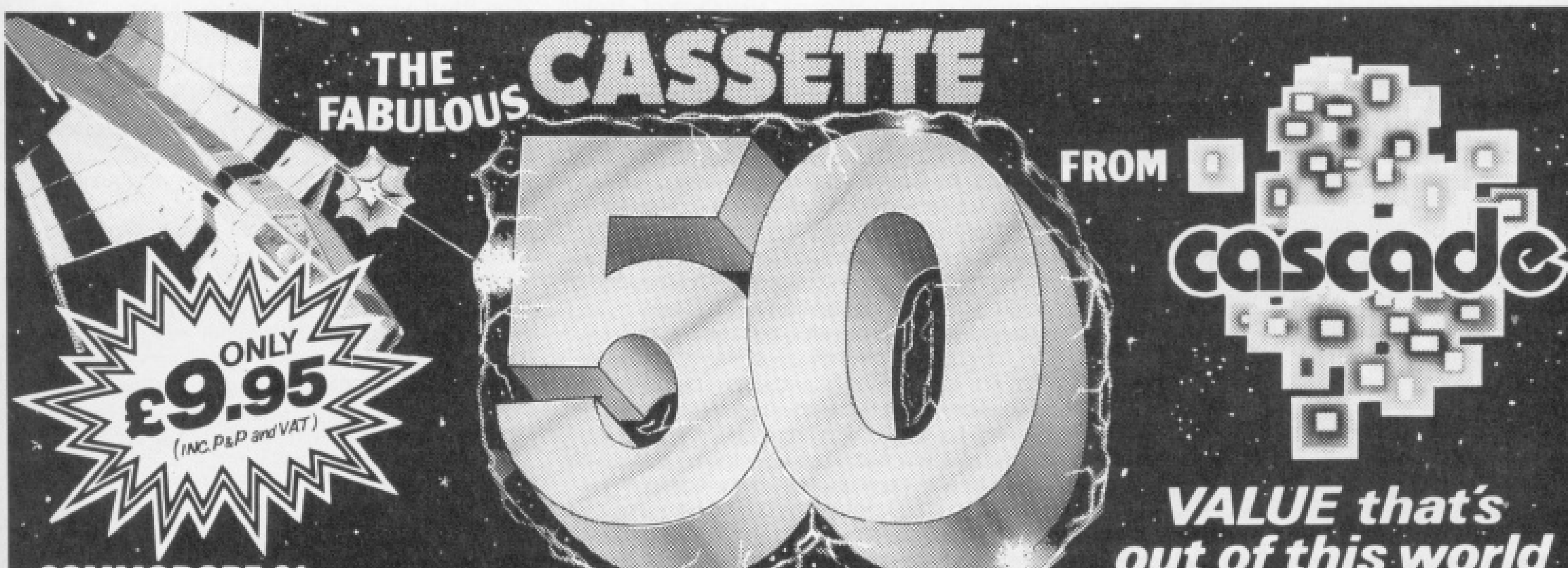
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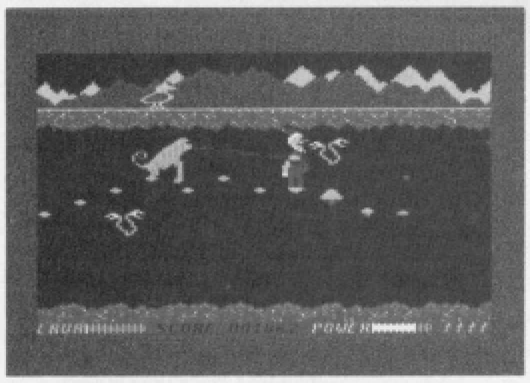
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WITCHSWITCH
English Software £8.95



Pete Save the soul of a misguided witch, at the same time stopping a pretty little village from being destroyed by the lava pouring out of a rogue volcano. That's all you have to do in this clever and graphically excellent game.

The idea is to transport a pouch of magic powder to the witch's kitchen and drop it in the cauldron she's stirring.

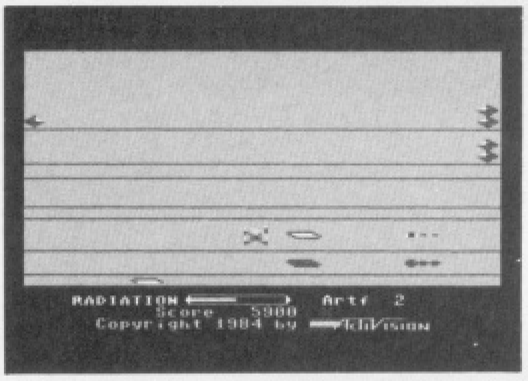
The game has six stages in all. You start off as a monkey and you have to lasso a leprechaun (who bears a strange resemblance to Santa Claus) so that he'll lead you across the Black Swamp. On the way, you've got to fight off a nasty bird by flicking it with your tail. All good stuff!

You then have to pass the pouch to a wise owl, having already fought off evil ravens by chucking pebbles at them — as well as leaping over a hostile broomstick. Off the owl flies over the poisoned lake, killing snakes and avoiding the deadly clouds. Then you whiz through a forest full of nasty slugs and try to pop the powder in the witch's brew.

Witchswitch is an entertaining program, with lots of good ideas and an excellent selection of jolly tunes. Unfortunately, it's not the hardest of games and with only six stages it might not have the staying power to rank with the best.

Steve Curiouser and curiouser. This one combines elements of arcade and adventure, only it has you doing daft things like collaring leprechauns to get you across swamps and chucking stones at pigeons. Still, once I'd got over the silliness of the story, I must admit it was all absorbing. At least it's imaginative, which is all too rare these days. Pretty graphics too!

PASTFINDER
Activision £10.99



Steve This is one of those weird little games that has you passing through all sorts of surreal landscapes that scroll down the screen at you. Your task here is to search a planet for a number of artifacts from the past.

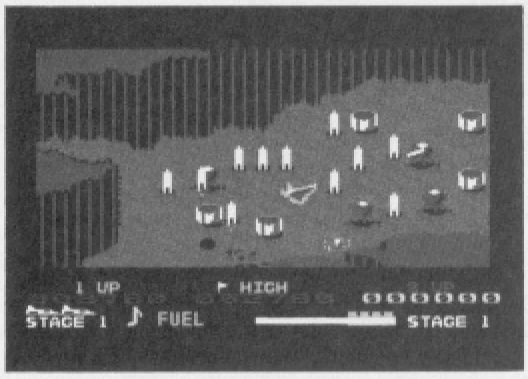
Of course, there are the usual hassles — the landscape is covered with all manner of peculiar looking nasties that, unfortunately, are indistinguishable from the artifacts.

So off we go! Your trusty craft is called a 'Leeper' which lopes along the ground quite happily, moving from side to side and leaping in the air.

The planet's landscape is divided into sectors and it's up to you to decide which one to cover first; the levels of radiation in each sector are colour coded for easy reference. To help you in your quest, there's a choice of four weapons: two sorts of shield, a scrambler to prevent enemy ships homing in on you and a deradiator to clean off that nasty radiation. It's not advisable to load all these weapons at once, however, because if your Leeper's destroyed (which happens quite regularly) you lose the lot for good! You'll soon work out which weapons operate most effectively. Overall, *Pastfinder's* a very nice little game, and it's quite addictive to boot!

Pete It was the abstraction of this game that made it such fun. There are obvious similarities with *Zaxxon* — hopping over walls and blasting approaching ships — but the strangeness of the spiderish craft and the collection of objects of a large playing area give *Pastfinder* a dose of originality that should keep it up on the screens for a long time.

3D SKRAMBLE
Live Wire £6.95



Pete *Skramble* fans have waited a long time for this 3D version of the thrilling old arcade favourite. Unfortunately, I'm afraid they're going to be a bit disappointed.

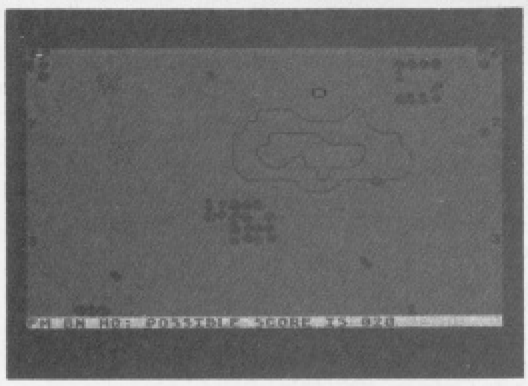
It's the same format as before — you still have to guide your ship through six perilous stages, bombing dumps to refuel while dodging or destroying rockets. And the idea of adding the third dimension to what was previously a side-on view seems great!

Livewire's effort, however, has graphics that are way too fuzzy and a perspective that confuses rather than satisfies. Worse still, the game's far too easy. The stage where you confront wildly oscillating obstacles should be a nightmare; here, though, they look like pulsating fried eggs with nothing better to do than get pronged by your rapid fire. And as for bombing the fuel dumps — it's a cinch! The enemy rockets make only pathetic attempts to halt your progress. Music and colour are both good, but this game hasn't quite got what it takes.

The 3D perspective is quite badly simulated and it's very difficult to distinguish where the nasties are in relation to you ... not that it matters too much! The only thing to worry about is finding a splint for your 'trigger' thumb — you'll need it. Overall, a great game if it's your first foray into the arcades ... otherwise, a noble failure!

Steve Ah, a good old fashioned arcade game ... disengage brain and fire away. *3D Skramble* is a sort of mutant descendant of *Zaxxon* with a wide variety of lovely things to bomb and shoot at. Games like this make you glad you don't have to play it in an arcade ... the amount of 20ps which could slip through the fingers makes the brain reel!

COMBAT LEADER
US Gold £14.95



Steve I'm sure you know the feeling. There you are, in command of a lumbering monster, your sweaty hand tugging at the joystick control as you zero in on the next target — the machinery groaning as it responds to your command to fire.

No, of course I'm not talking about our beloved Commodore 64! This description is directed solely at a tank that's the star of *Combat Leader*. In this war-time strategy, you're placed in command of a platoon of tanks or infantry, or both, or whatever combination you feel like.

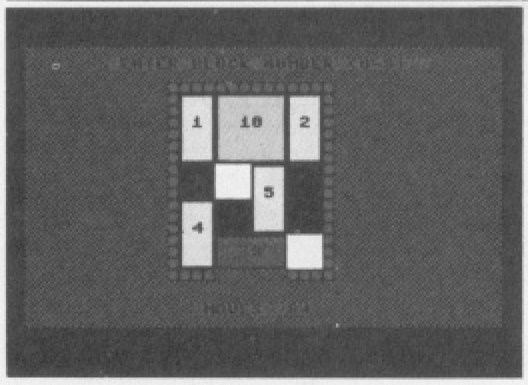
You kick off the manoeuvres with your squad at the bottom of the screen; if you waggle your joystick suitably, you can order your tanks to join you at that position. Incidentally, if you thought you could cheat, and check out what the opposition are up to ... tough; the enemy forces are invisible until within a 90 degree radius of one of your tanks. Thus, your chaps have to keep an eye out for stray tanks on the horizon and then blast them — which is pretty much all you end up doing as soon as combat actually starts.

The graphics are no oil painting, but then everything's been drawn in green! The tanks look fairly unrealistic as they trundle up the screen, but it's only when they get destroyed that you're reminded of what they really look like — squashed beetles! Still if you're into war-game simulations you'll love this one!

Pete This is certainly a superior strategy game — even the novice option is complex and intriguing. Armchair generals will get a lot of pleasure from the game. What they won't get is clear graphics or sound!

ACTION REPLAY

THE THINKER
Atlantis £1.99



Pete *The Thinker* bears on its cassette cover a picture, modelled on Rodin's *Le Penseur*, of a man deep in thought — presumably about the 'sliding block' puzzle that's inside. However, I wouldn't mind betting that what he's really puzzling over is the profound awfulness of this program!

According to the blurb, it's 'guaranteed to give you weeks of absolute hell'. Well, more like minutes, and all for the wrong reasons! 'If you value your sanity', the prose continues gushingly, 'don't buy this game'. Now there's a sentiment I can agree with!

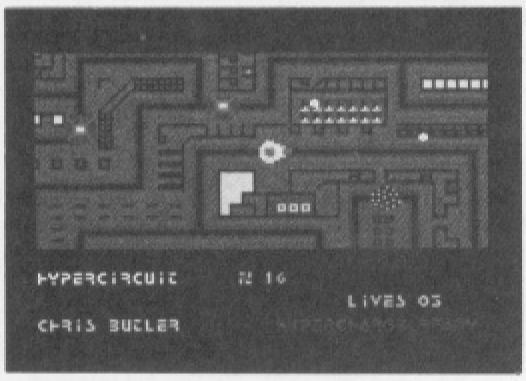
Essentially, *The Thinker* is a two-dimensional version of *Rubik's Cube*. Ten coloured blocks within a rectangle are displayed, and your task is to move the red block — at the top — out through the gap at the bottom by shuffling the other blocks around.

It's not an easy game, but who cares? If you want to play a game like this, then buy a *Rubik's Cube — The Thinker* occupies about a third of the available screen, and can hardly be said to stretch the graphics or sound capabilities of the 64 to their limits. However, you may find that it'll stretch your patience!

Steve Do you remember Lucky Bags? You know they sometimes used to have those little plastic boards, complete with jumbled-up letters that you had to sort out into the correct order. Well, *The Thinker*'s just like that, only you have to move different sized blocks of colour. Quite intriguing, but Lucky Bags were cheaper and you got toffee thrown in too!

Overall, though unoriginal, the game is priced very competively and, if you're into mind-bending puzzles, it's worth a look.

HYPERCIRCUIT
Alligator £7.95



Steve There appears to be an increasing tendency for computer software to stare lovingly at its own navel, and *Hypercircuit* from Alligata Software is just such an animal.

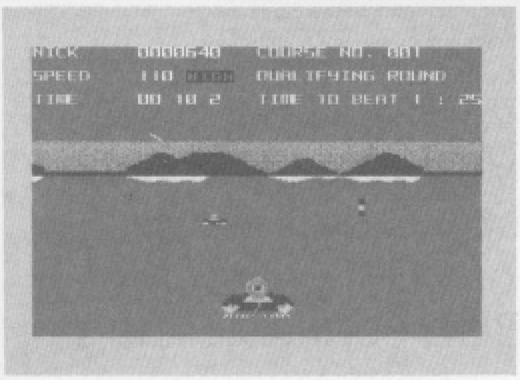
The object of the game is to travel around the innards of a computer, blasting away at the various bugs that inhabit the micro-world. You start off in a random position on the circuit and travel along the bus lines blasting happily away. Your shots travel along said lines and, if there just happens to be one of the nasties in the way ... Kaboom! Trouble is, there you are sitting by a transistor, minding your own business and, from around the corner of a T junction lurks a bug. 'Aha', say you and fire — your shot flies off in the opposite direction and you get eaten by the bug! Oh well.

Other things to note are that the tracks are rather thin and it's very tricky to get your fire base to turn corners ... which is a bit of a nuisance when you're stuck in one of the many multitudinous dead ends (leading to a processor or some such). Furthermore, the bugs don't play fair and stick to the tracks — they also have a tendency to float across at you from where you can't shoot at the things. Hmm.

The graphics are nice enough and the game seems well coded. All in all, a fairly ordinary little 'shoot-'em-up'!

Pete A rollicking good blast to start off, with its compelling music and non-stop firing — but the attraction of *Hypercircuit* soon fades (after about five minutes if my experience is anything to go by). It didn't have enough variety or skill to engross me — after all, who wants to spend the rest of their life in a circuit board?

AQUA RACER
Bubble Bus £6.95



Pete Q. How do people play *Pole Position* in Venice, where the streets are full of water? A. They don't. They play *Aqua Racer* instead.

This little number is a translation of all those motor-racing games from a solid to a watery course and instead of cars, you're kitted out with speedboats. As in the old Atari favourite, you begin with a qualifying round — and it's easy 'cause there are no other boats to get in the way. But the track, marked out by posts, is snaky enough to make it a pretty tough formality.

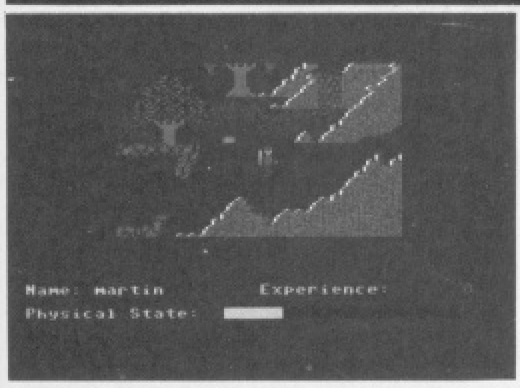
After that, you've got a choice of 20 courses, that all seem to range between difficult and impossible. Rival boats appear very quickly, while the course twists this way and that, so it takes some time to get the hang of steering.

Aqua Racer has very pretty graphics, the 3D perspective works well, the water's a deep blue and the green mountains in the distance are inviting enough to make you persevere. And another thing, the music is very, very loud.

Racing simulations are often addictive, especially if you're matched up with a program that wants to win! Thankfully, *Aqua Racer* is just such a game — it's not sophisticated, but you might enjoy it.

Steve This game is a sort of *Pole Position* on water that has you zipping around a track avoiding other competitors who insist on getting in the way. What makes this game that bit more difficult than *Pole Position*, is that the track is coloured in the same blue as the surrounding area ... which means you've got to keep a close eye on the beacons. A tricky game that requires fast reflexes and a great deal of concentration. Good clean fun.

SHADES
Durell Software £8.95



Pete Here we have yet another 'fully animated 3D adventure', in which you guide a stranger through a land of mystery in search of the solution to some horrible problem. This time you've got to 'rid Arulan of the curse of the SHADES, which causes people to vanish and reappear somewhere else'. Pretty bad, eh?

And, frankly, the stick-like figure you control doesn't really look up to the job. He's nicely animated, but there's not a lot of meat on him. In fact, it must be said that the graphics are rather disappointing — the display takes up only a third of the screen and the landscapes and monsters are all slightly fuzzy.

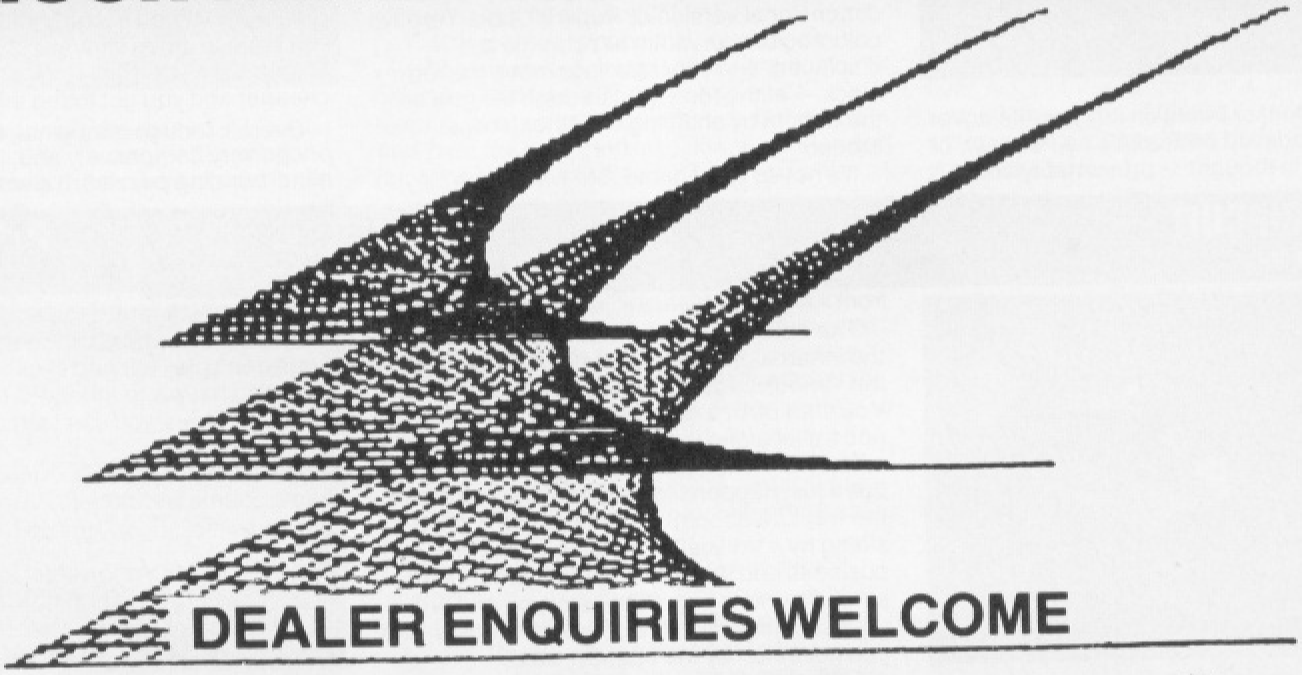
These monsters come in all shapes and forms, including walking trees, revolting green blobs, apes and even a mysterious mess of ectoplasm that sometimes wraps itself around you at the very beginning of the game. Your character is supposed to be able to plead or fight with any monsters encountered; pleading or fighting — all I met was 100 per cent failure. They're a hard-hearted bunch in Arulan.

Sound, graphics and action aren't going to make you purr with delight, but *Shades* does have a reasonable adventure element and cartographers will certainly have fun trying to map it out.

Steve This game's a cross between the 'I see nothing special' adventure and an arcade scrap. Wandering through the various scenes admiring the pleasant scenery is very nice, making a welcome relief from all that 'go north' nonsense. Actually, for once, I would have preferred a bit more adventure and a bit less arcade, as the battles do get a bit tiresome. But it's definitely worth a look!

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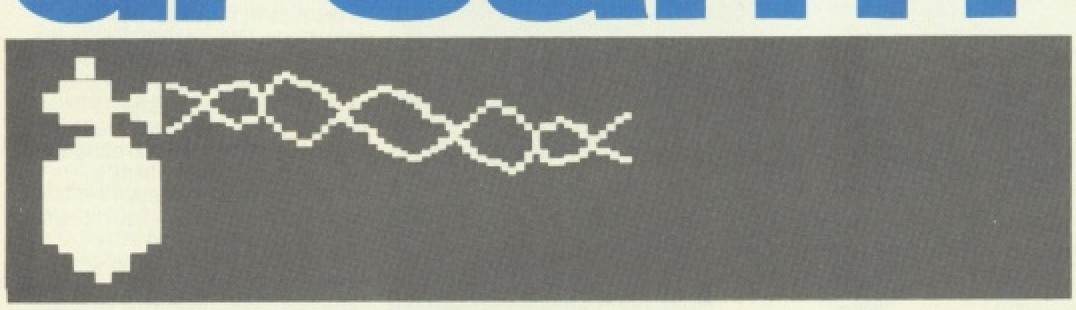
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AN IMPOSSIBLE dream?



Every now and then, you get a game that not only fulfils all its expectations to entertain you, but also becomes a classic exercise in the art of programming. And Impossible Mission *is just such a game! Denying the very existence of the word 'impossible', agents* Steve Cooke *and* Steve Broadhurst *set off in search of Elvin Atombender. Be there!*

IN CONTROL?

This is the window provided on-screen allowing you to display the contents of your PC's memory. Here, you'll see a display of the puzzle pieces you've collected.

These are the pieces of the puzzle that you're working on at the moment.

This is our heroic agent in the lift; pressing the fire-button gains you access to your personal computer.

These are the access tunnels to the adjoining rooms in the underground complex.

Having manipulated the puzzle pieces in the PC's memory, this strip is coloured red if the two pieces in the window are aligned correctly.



These icons allow you to scroll through the puzzle pieces you've already collected in the PC's window provided on-screen.

THE KEYPAD

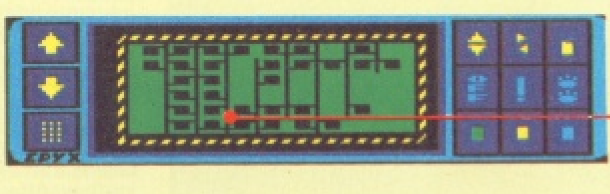
1. This flips the puzzle piece upside-down.
2. This swivels the puzzle piece from left to right.
3. The wastebin — to clear unwanted puzzle pieces (they're still stored in the PC's memory, though!).
4. Activate this icon and you'll close down the PC.
5. The exclamation mark pulls the last puzzle piece stuffed into the wastebin.
6. The 'paws' key suspends time in the game.
7. This alters the puzzle piece being worked on to green.
8. As above, the puzzle piece is turned yellow.
9. Again, the puzzle piece is coloured blue.

Complete with authentic American dialling tone, this icon allows you to phone for assistance from mission HQ. Remember that it'll cost you two minutes for each call, though!

The number of 'snoozes' you've found so far is shown here. Use them wisely!

This figure here shows you how many lift initiators you've collected so far.

This is what you'll see on-screen before you activate your personal computer; notice that you've got a complete plan-view of the rooms you've already been in.



When you're not in a room, the bottom half of the screen can be in one of two modes. Most of the time, it'll provide a map of the rooms you've visited so far and an indication of where the lift shaft takes you. However, you can also access your personal computer and manoeuver the 'moving finger' around to make use of its facilities.

It's 3 o'clock in the morning, and a hideous scream echoes round the bedroom, followed immediately by a burst of demonic laughter. A bleary-eyed figure, hands twitching, rises unsteadily from its seat in front of a glowing VDU and staggers towards the bed, muttering "Impossible ... it's impossible ... utterly impossible ..." before collapsing in a heap on to the bed. Strange and wonderful shapes flit across the screen as the figure falls into fitful sleep.

No, it's not another one of those late-night horror re-runs on the TV but a tragic case of 'Impossible Missionmania'. Caused by prolonged exposure to a program released recently by CBS/Epyx, this fatal addiction makes a heroin habit look like a mild attraction to *Smarties*! You just have to look at this game and you start shaking all over with anticipation. This game really has it all ... good graphics, splendid animation and — Ye Gods — it speaks.

The Plot So Far ...

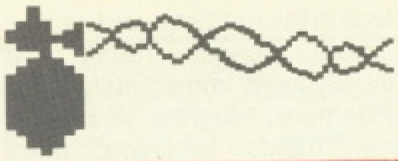
Imagine a cross between *Jet Set Willy*, *Encounter*, and the 20 minute computer-generated sequence from *The Last Starfighter* movie and you'll begin to get some idea of what this game is all about. Not only is the presentation superb, but the game itself demands every ounce of your game-playing skill. Strategy, reflexes, endurance, and an indomitable will-to-win are just a few of the abilities you'll need to hone to peak performance if your going to get anywhere near completing this game!

Evil genius Elvin Atombender is hell-bent on world-destruction and you, stepping into the role of Agent 4125, must save us all from the Big Bang. At the beginning of the game, you see yourself suspended in a lift above an empty shaft, ready to plunge down into Elvin Atombender's underground stronghold. In a sudden burst of brilliant speech synthesis, a voice from nowhere booms out of your TV: "Aha! another visitor! Stay awhile! Stay .. forever!!".

There are 32 rooms in the complex, each joined by a network of passages and lift-shafts. The rooms are laid out differently each time you play the game so you'll need a good sense of direction and instant recall to keep track of which ones you've already mastered. Before you even enter a room, though, you'll be gawping at the way the figure runs around on-screen — the animation is really state-of-the-art for a micro. Even here the sound is out of this world, with footsteps ringing hollowly on the empty passage adding tension to your thoughts of what's up ahead.

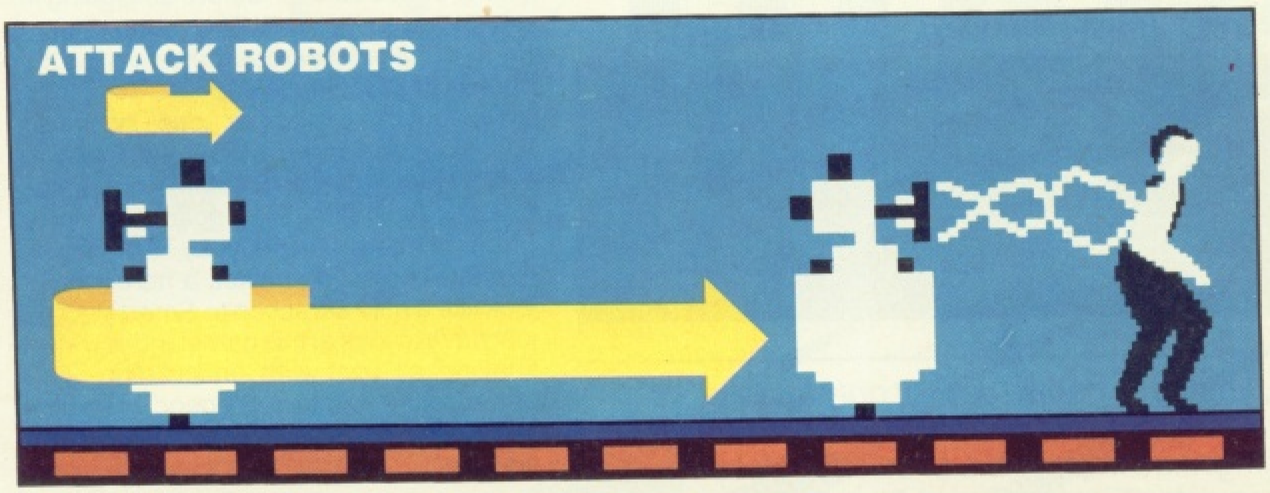
On The Level!

Each room, with one or two exceptions, consists of a series of platforms or levels, connected by smaller platforms that act as lifts; by standing on one of these smaller platforms and pushing the joystick forward you can rise up to the next level. Otherwise the only way to move from level to level is by jumping, and as soon as you press the fire-button you get



the distinct feeling that Agent 4125 has been taking gymnastic lessons on the sly from Olga Korbutt ... he doesn't jump, he somersaults with all the ease of an Olympic champion! The animation'll probably have you doing somersaults too — quite simply it's the best I've seen yet on the 64, or any other micro for that matter!

Scattered around the rooms are various articles of furniture: VDU screens, computer terminals, bookcases, and other items (including a very discreet WC). Each of these must be searched to see if they contain anything interesting; searching is done by standing in front of the object, whereupon a little panel



This type of robot senses your presence, and attacks. Easily the most unpredictable in *Impossible Mission*, these droid-lookalikes are fairly indistinguishable from the others — but as soon as you get near, they'll whip around and, after a couple of moment's grace, try and ram you. Your most difficult task is to sort out whether a particular robot will attack or not — if it does, get out of range quick as it'll certainly run faster than you! However, now you've found out its identity, you'll notice that it only fires when it reaches the end of its dash — so, if you stand still in its path and jump as it tries to ram you, you'll be able to run to safety.

Security Terminals

You'll find two security terminals in each room (sometimes more, sometimes less) that can be used to disable the robots temporarily or reset the lifting platforms. You log on to the terminal by standing in front of it and pushing your joystick forward; the screen then changes to give you a clear picture of the VDU.

The Moving Ball

In a similar way to the ball that forever followed Patrick McGoohan in *The Prisoner* TV series, you'll find that in some rooms a large black ball will dog your tracks. The trick here is to move around the screen and let the ball follow you until it hits an object — it'll then explode!

The Lifts

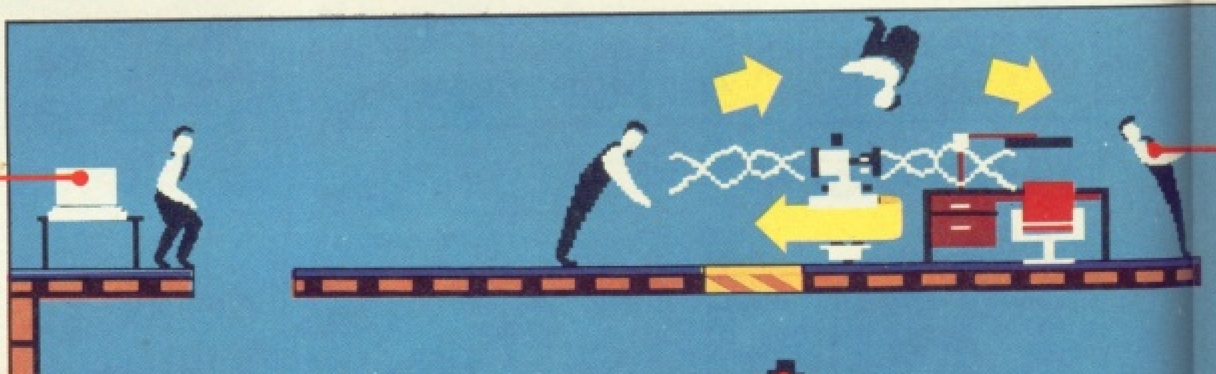
You'll be able to spot the lifts as they're coloured yellow with a brown stripe. Step on to one of these and jerk the joystick up or down and — Hey Presto! — you move to the next platform up or down.

The Control Room

This is the door to Elvin Atombender's control room . . . and there's no point in even thinking about entering here until you've cracked all nine puzzles (and seeing you've got to find four pieces of the punchcard to solve each puzzle, time is of the essence).

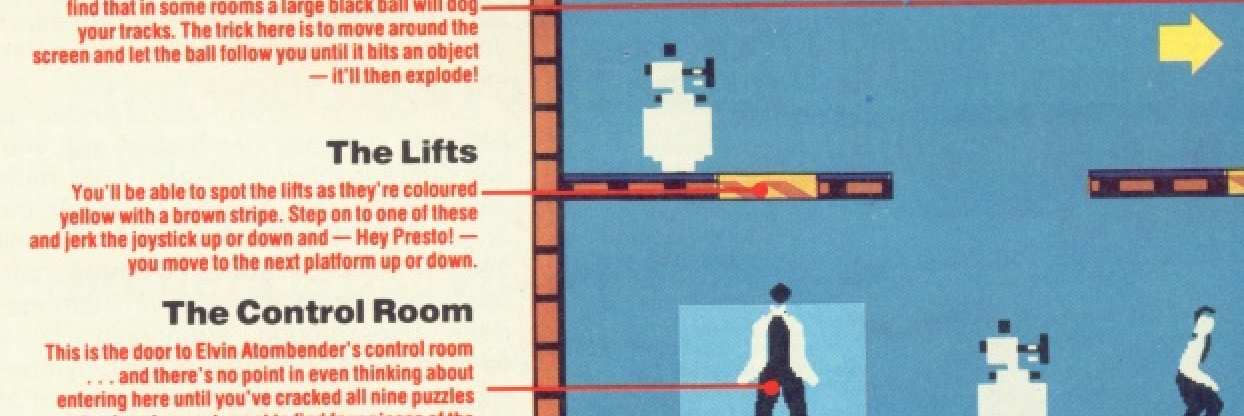
Space Hopping

In at least one room in *Impossible Mission*, you're faced with the 'impossible' task of jumping over a number of ledges at the bottom of the screen to the lift in the middle. The trick is to get as near as you can to the edge of the nearest ledge, and run; try it out in a part of the game where you won't die when you fall — you'll find that you really can walk on air!



The Furniture

In each room, you'll find a wealth of hi-tech furniture and computer hardware strewn about the platforms. But it's not all micro peripherals — you'll also come across a candy machine, a jukebox and even a toilet . . . shades of *Jet Set Willy?*

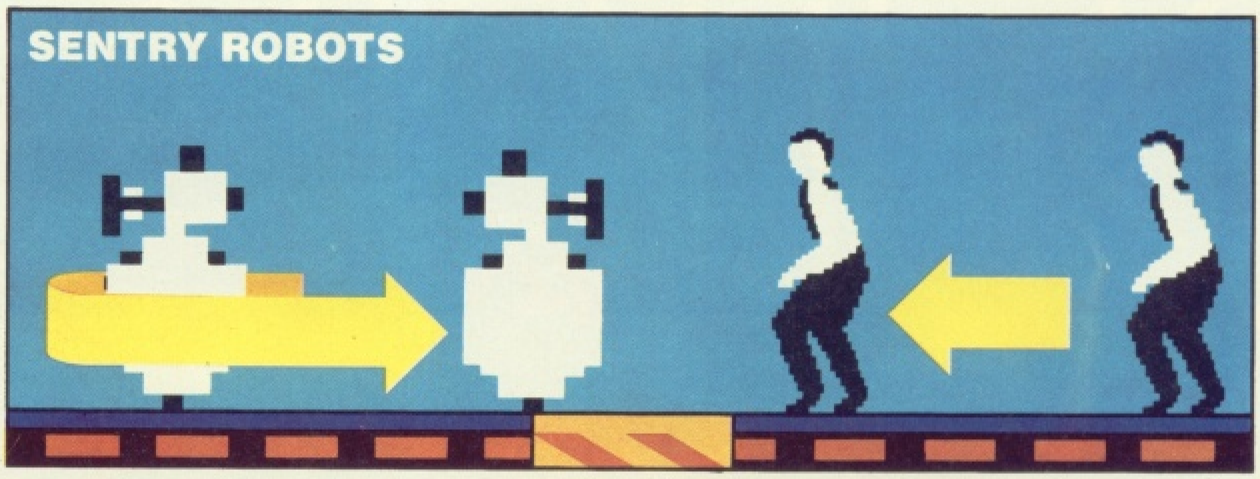


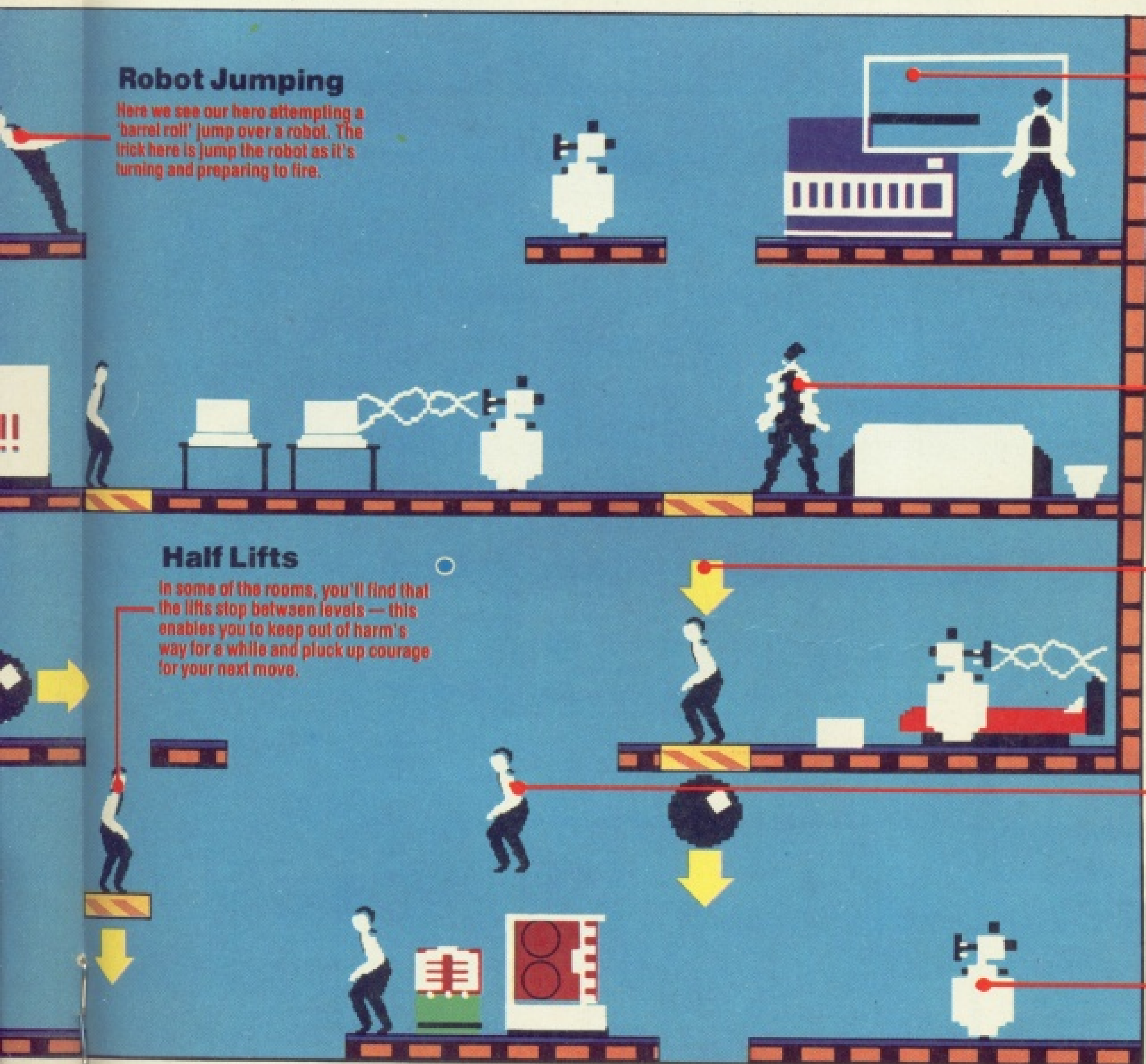
You'll notice these critters straight away — as they're the ones firing the lasers! These robots have a fixed platform to patrol, and they move a small amount and then fire, up to a maximum of four times in one direction. Some 'patrol' robots exhibit slightly different behaviour patterns — such as firing in each direction after each movement, and sometimes they won't fire lasers at all on their return journey. After you've studied the behaviour of a particular robot, get as near as you can to its laser blast and, as soon as the robot is re-charging its laser and moving forward, jump as quickly as possible; timing is fairly critical . . . so be careful!

appears above it giving you visual indication of how long it'll take to search before its secret is given up. Of course, don't expect to find something in each object — quite often, you'll spend ages manipulating your agent around the screen to search a particular location only to be given the 'Nothing Here' message. The word you're looking for, by the way, is 'frustrating'!

But there's more ... well, the game does have to live up to its title! Atombender's complex is patrolled by the most vicious robots yet seen. Short and stubby, they patrol the levels, lasers blasting. It may sound fairly run-of-the-mill, but these robots are tricky! Some just sit there pretending to be asleep, until you turn up — and they're after you like demons. But there's quite a bit of humour in the program here — some robots, for example,

The trouble with this breed of modern-day Dalek is that they don't come at you blasting away — rather they just sit there passively, lulling you into a false sense of security, and then they blast you! Sentry robots are sited on-screen with the sole purpose of protecting something — be it a lift or an item of furniture. Often, they will just sit there blasting one way and then the other, offering you the opportunity to leap in, search it for a couple of moments and then leap out of the way. Others, though, just sit there quietly and, as soon as you approach, they'll shoot to kill; here you've little option but to use a 'snooze' to debilitate the robot if you're going to get past.





Search Mode

On reaching a piece of furniture, stand in front of it and push the joystick forward; this reveals a small panel above our heroic agent, which indicates the time you've got to spend to examine its contents. You don't have to do all your searching in one go — in fact, this will usually be impossible as you're being chased by robots — but you can build up your search-time over a number of visits.

Energy Build-Up

We're talking rare occurances here! In some rooms, you may find yourself vapourising inexplicably. This is because the room has an in-built sensor timing your presence and, once you've been there too long . . . you're in for a nasty shock.

Ball Trapping

A good way to rid yourself of the balls that seem to follow you in certain screens is to manoeuver yourself so that the ball's below a lift and you're on top. Then, you can lower the lift and push the ball out of the bottom of the screen — watch out, though, as it'll turn up at the top!

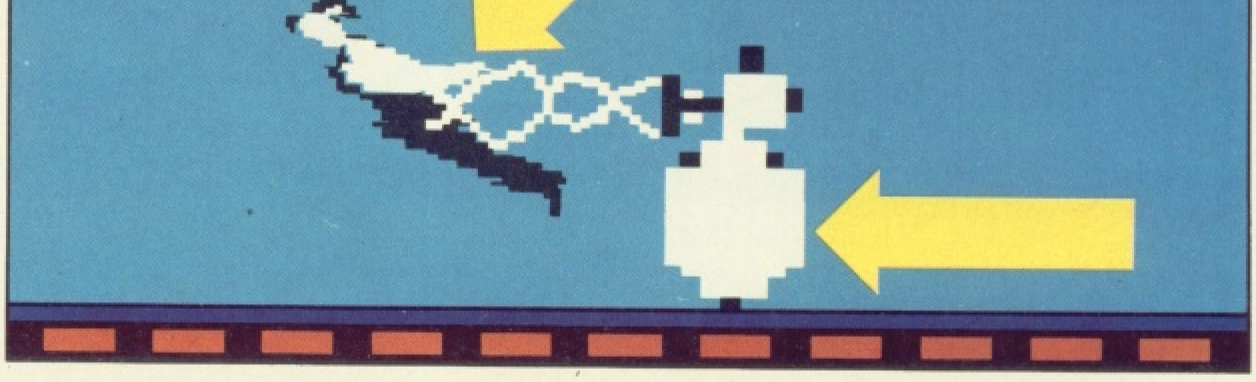
Platform Jumping

Jumping from platform to platform is an acquired art! For long jumps, a long run-up is required — and often, you'll find that you'll be leaping from mid-air before you get the lift you need to reach safety!

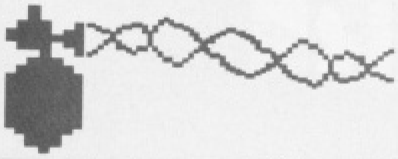
Robots

There are eight different breeds of these metal maniacs in the underground complex, and they're all pretty nasty! Once you've sorted out the pre-programmed movements of the robots, you're only half-way there — each time you play the game, all the robots are swopped around.

Although slow in their movements, tag robots can be very annoying in that they cause you to waste a lot of precious time. Usually, these robots can be found, either on the level above or below you, dogging your every movement. This means that if you go up to the next level via a lift, a tag robot will be awaiting your presence, either blocking your leap to safety or ready to blast you as soon as you get in range. If you're above or below a tag robot, try running in the opposite direction to the one you really want to go in, allowing the droid to follow — then, dash back and do whatever you have to do in the seconds you've got left until the robot tags you.




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will sit there looking menacing, but pay no attention at all as you tip-toe past. Others again will wander aimlessly around in another part of the screen, until they suddenly blast the wall and electrify all the surfaces in the room — hot feet and a cold grave for Agent 4125.

This Is Your Life

You can't actually lose lives as such in this game — playing against the clock, each time you get killed you lose ten minutes and you're back to the entrance of the room you got killed in. Although you can jump (or fall) any distance with impunity, death swiftly follows contact with a robot, a laser bolt or a careless fall through a hole in the floor (accompanied by a terrible scream of despair as you plunge out of sight).

When you first get to play the game, you'll find you get killed with desperate regularity — which just shows one of the program's little subtleties; beginners get killed more often and so the game doesn't go on for so long! Once you really get into the game, you can avoid death with reasonable certainty and concentrate on the more complex parts of the mission.

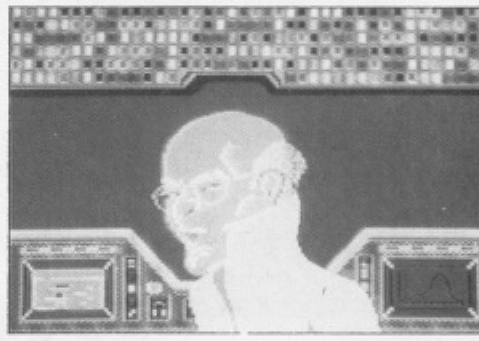
As you search the rooms, you'll uncover snoozes and lift resets, which can be used in any room where a terminal is provided for you to log on to; having logged on, you can temporary disable the robots in that room (using a snooze) or reset the lifts. What you'll also find if you search the objects are puzzle pieces. Although you get 200 points for each piece of the puzzle, and 100 points each for the snoozes and resets, don't think that scoring is the real objective of this game ... because it's not! Once you've collected all the pieces (and that should take you a month or so of practice!) the real work begins!

And Finally ...

Whenever you're in the lift shaft, you'll find that pressing the fire-button doesn't make you jump — instead, it toggles the display at the bottom of the screen between a map of those parts of the maze explored so far and the display of your mega-amazing portable MIA9366B Pocket Computer. Using this you can examine the puzzle pieces already collected and attempt to piece them together to form the code that will defeat Atombender. To help you, your MIA9366B will correctly orientate the pieces and check whether any are missing. To do this however, you must go on-line (accompanied by delightful dialling tone sound-effects) and, more seriously, forfeit more of your precious time.

Impossible Mission has to be the strongest contender yet for a CBM 64 'Game Of The Year'. Not only does it look and sound great, but it combines the challenge of many different game-types. You'll need timing and judgement to negotiate the rooms, a good memory to keep track of the different rooms and their contents, and you'll also have to develop a sound sense of robot psychology! Definitely a game that belongs on every 64 owner's shelf — unless, of course, you can't face the prospect of sleepless nights for next month or so.

STOP PRESS



Mission Complete!

Our thanks go out to Dave Roberts, who battled his way in to the *Y64* editorial offices to show us hw *Impossible Mission should* be played. It took him just over the hour to get to the final screen and, luckily, our photographer Liz was there to snap up the action. With a final score of 21,423, Dave was modest to the end — all he wants to do now is finish without losing a life. Good luck, Dave!

SCRATCHPAD

Join us this issue for the new-look Scratchpad, in which Commodore 64 supremo Jamie Clyde *invites you to send in your software hints. Welcome to this month's pot-pourri of the best hints and tips around.*

Calling all you red-hot 64 programmers . . . if you've trod the long and tortuous path to programming proficiency, why not share your experiences with your fellow *Y64* readers?

We're not after mega-routines that solve the more major problems, rather we're on the look-out for small routines that you've found to be the most efficient way of dealing with a specific hassle. It doesn't matter if you've only got a five-line program to offer — if you think it'll be useful for other programmers, send it off now; remember, it's quality we're after, not quantity! Take a look at the routines we've included here and you'll get a good idea of what we're after; they may not look much at first glance, but when you're starting in on a large program, it's this sort of routine that saves you the bytes!

All the routines have been written to the same format — that of lines 20-50 formatted to call up the routine from the main part of the program, and lines 1000 on containing the routine itself. Obviously, it would be easier if any submissions could be in the same style; any routines published here will not only make you famous, but will be paid for according to their worth — we pay well, but they've got to be good!

Enough from me, though, and on to the routines themselves. And, remember, if you've got a helpful software hint you'd like to share with *Y64* readers, write now to Scratchpad, *Your 64,* 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Let's be hearing from you.

Input Control

```
500 PRINT "████7██ ██";:A$="":GOSUB1000
:END
999 :
1000 REM * MAIN ROUTINE *
1010 GETR$:IFR$=""THEN1010
1015 IFR$=" "THEN11050
1020 IFR$=CHR$(13)THEN PRINT"█":RETURN
1030 IFR$=CHR$(20)ANDLEN(A$)>0THENPPRINT
"█ ███ ██";:A$=LEFT$(A$,LEN(A$)-1)
1040 R=ASC(R$):IFR<65OR(R>90ANDR<192)ORR
>223THEN1010
1050 IFLEN(A$)<14THENPRINTR$"███";:A$=A$
+R$
1060 GOTO1010
```

As you probably know, the 64's INPUT command is limited, in that you can't just enter any old characters — for instance, press the wrong key accidently and you can find yourself in all sorts of trouble. The routine given here disables all the keys that'll cause you problems, leaving you free to make use of the rest. Any statements should be entered into the array A$ in line 500.

High Scores

```
20 :
30 DIM S(10),S$(10):FORT=1TO10:S(T)=0:S$
(T)="THE COMPUTER":NEXT
50 A$="<<ENTER NAME HERE>>":S=100
60 GOSUB1000:END
999 :
1000 REM * MAIN ROUTINE *
1010 PRINT"█"TAB(12)"██ HALL OF FAME! "
1020 FORT=1TO10:IFS(T)<STHENGOSUB1200:GO
TO1035
1030 NEXT
1035 FORT1=1TO10
1040 PRINT"████"T1"█"TAB(7)S(T1)" █"TAB(
15)S$(T1):NEXT
1050 PRINT"████████  ** PRESS ANY TO CO
TINUE **"
1060 PRINT"█"LEFT$("████████████████████
██",T*2)
1070 POKE646,RND(1)*4+12:PRINT"███"TTAB(
7)S(T)TAB(15)S$(T):WAIT162,180
1080 IFPEEK(198)=0THEN1070
1090 RETURN
1200 FORT1=9TO1STEP-1:S(T+1)=S(T):S$(T+1
)=S$(T):NEXT:S$(T)=A$:S(T)=S
1210 RETURN
20000 PRINTPEEK((162):GOTO20000
```

Once you've written a game, one of your first tasks will be to install a 'high score' routine. The listing given here does just that, with the array A$ containing the name of the last player (which can be entered using the INPUT routine) and 'S' holding the winning score. S() and S$() are used for the top ten scores and their scorers respectively.

Centering Text

```
11 :
20 TEXT$=" <<<ENTER TEXT HERE>>>":GOSUB1
000:END
999 :
1000 REM * MAIN ROUTINE *
1010 A=LEN(TEXT$):PRINTTAB((40-A)/2)TEXT
$
1020 RETURN
```

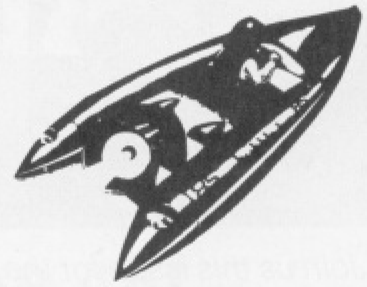
This routine's pretty straight-forward in that it'll centre any text you enter into TEXT$. The message you wish to centre can be of any length, and it can be combined with the PRINT AT routine that follows to centre your message anywhere on-screen.

PRINT AT

```
20 :
30 X=20:Y=30:P$="HULLO":GOSUB1000:PRINT"
█":END
999 :
1000 REM * MAIN ROUTINE *
1010 PRINT "█"LEFT$("██████████████████████
",Y)TAB(X)P$:RETURN
```

This routine asks, in line 30, for the X and Y co-ordinates of where you'd like your message printed on-screen. The message in array P$, 'HULLO', can be, of course, altered to one of your own making. Used within a large program, this routine will save an awful lot of memory; it'll also mean you can kiss goodbye to the awkward use of cursor controls in PRINT statements.

NEW





1 MILLION YEARS BC!

While sophistication seems to be the watchword of many games written for the CBM 64 nowadays, Software Project's BC's Quest For Tires *and Statesoft's* FRAK *are signalling a return to the thrill of the arcades. Join* Steve Malone *and* Sue Denham *as they find out if the thrill's still there....*

On the face of it, we're looking at a couple of arcade games here — no frills, just pure fast-tapping, joystick-toggling arcade. Which is a bit surprising when you consider the sophistication of most games marketed by the software houses of late. Still, if you're into games, there's nothing to match a 'mindless' arcade thriller ... but have *FRAK* and *BC's Quest For Tires* got what it takes?

First impressions can be misleading and while *FRAK* and *BC's Quest* look fairly similar — all leopardskin and hairy chests — they are, as any seasoned joystick jockey will tell you, very different beasts indeed! *BC's Quest* is one of those 'ducking and diving' sort of games that's gradually easing alien bashing out of the affections of arcade enthusiasts. *FRAK*, on the other hand, is more of your platform-style arcade adventure, negotiating the various levels to collect assorted nick-nacks, avoiding the awkwardly positioned baddies.

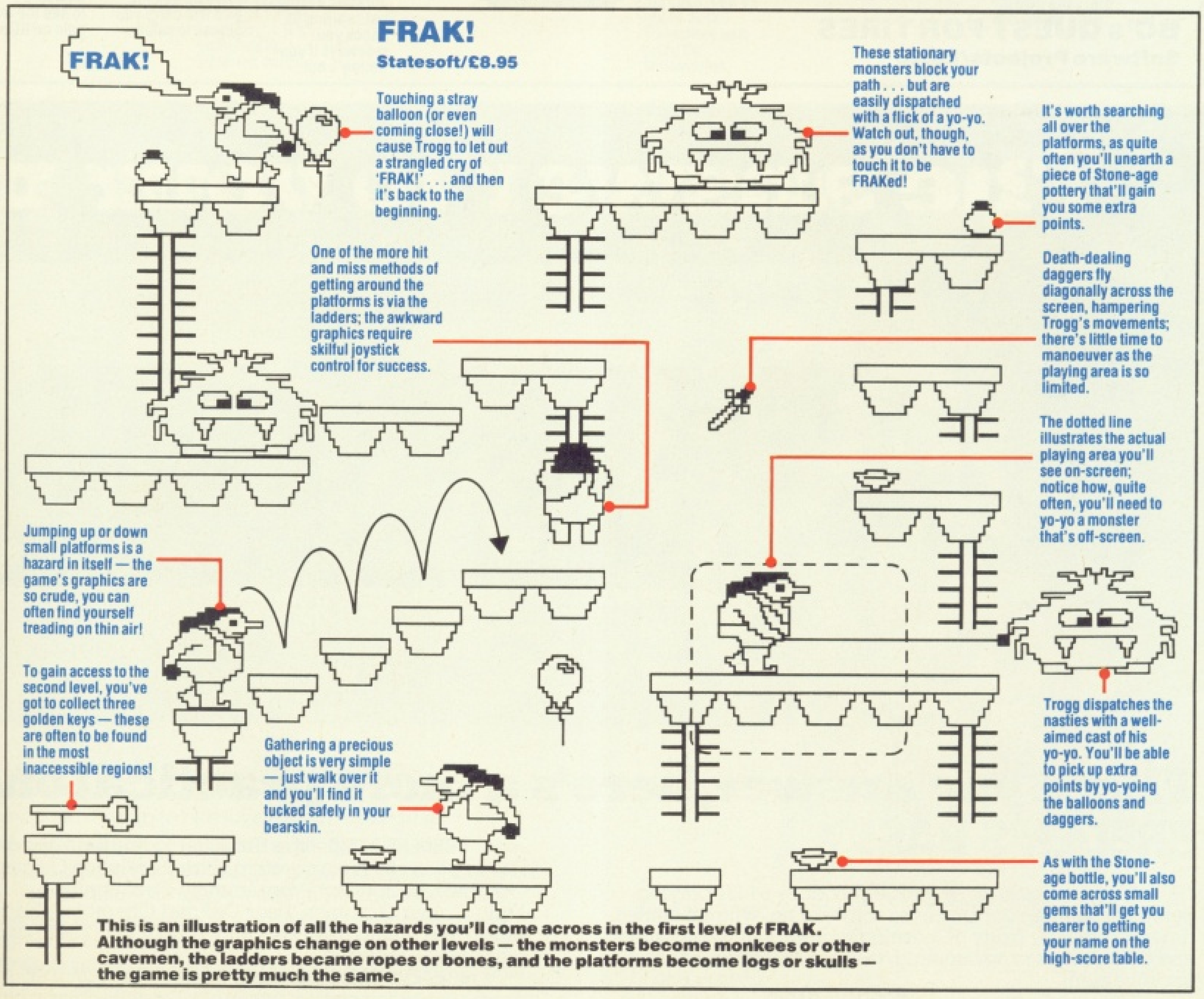
Caveman Comics

The first thing you'll notice is that both BC and Trogg (FRAK's hero) are kitted out in the di-rigeur leopard-skin rug made poopular by Raquel Welch in the 60's. The second thing that'll strike you is that the graphics in both games have a distinctly 'cartoonish' quality about them. This isn't altogether surprising in the case of *BC's Quest* as our hero is, in fact, the star of a Johnny Hart comic strip that appears in a well-known London newspaper (I forgot which one). Having said that, let's have a swift round of applause for the programmers as the game's character closely matches the hero of the comic strip.

FRAK, on the other hand, looks very much like an animated cartoon — the graphics make great use of slabs of primary colour (the sort of thing you'll find in *Mr Men* booklets). No complaints here ... but the sprites in *FRAK* (Trogg and his chums) are fully expanded and take up a goodly proportion of the available screen (which as the background remains a fairly boring old black or white is probably just as well).

In Control?

Both games are controlled from a joystick ... however, there the similarity ends. In *BC's Quest*, a gentle push on the joystick has BC flying through the air with the greatest of ease and it's just as easy to pull back to make him duck. Unfortunately, it's not like that in *FRAK*. To get poor old lumbering Trogg to jump across the gaps between the platforms, you really have to tug at the stick or he'll miss his footing and ... FRAK! It really gets quite tiring after a while...



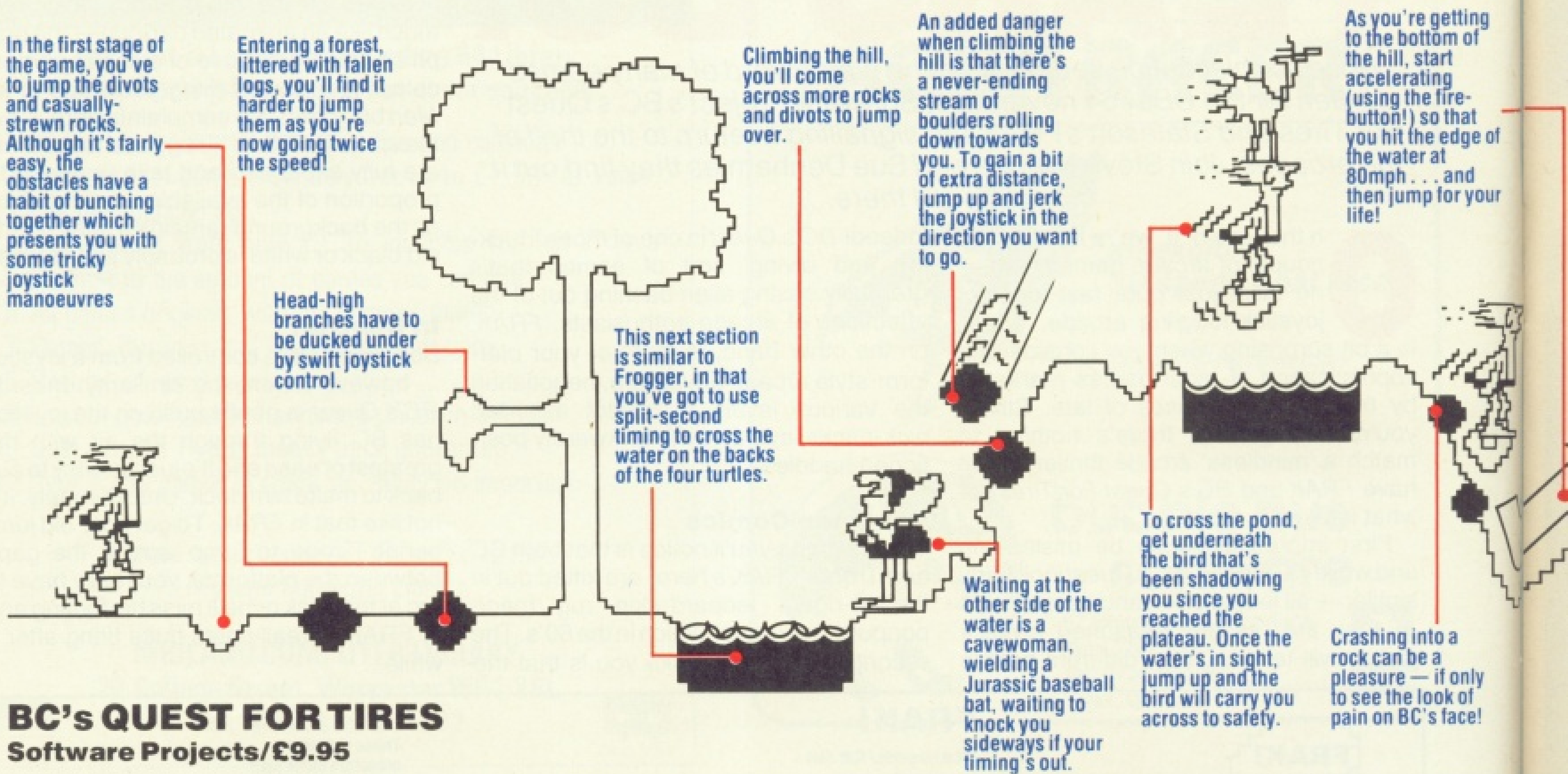
This is an illustration of all the hazards you'll come across in the first level of FRAK. Although the graphics change on other levels — the monsters become monkees or other cavemen, the ladders became ropes or bones, and the platforms become logs or skulls — the game is pretty much the same.

1 MILLION YEARS BC!

Now when a chap walks off a platform into thin air, prehistoric or not, you'd expect the poor lad to drop like a stone. Stands to reason. But not so in *FRAK*. It doesn't appear to have occured to the programmers to make sure that the foreground sprites match up to the background graphics.

In strict contrast, the coding on *BC's Quest* is a dream. Everything's tickety-boo and just where it should be. In fact, *BC's Quest* is just what a *game ordinaire* ought to be like in 1985 — good sound, graphics and coding. By now, the benchmark of the game should rest solely with the quality of the ideas used — proper implementation of the code should be taken for granted.

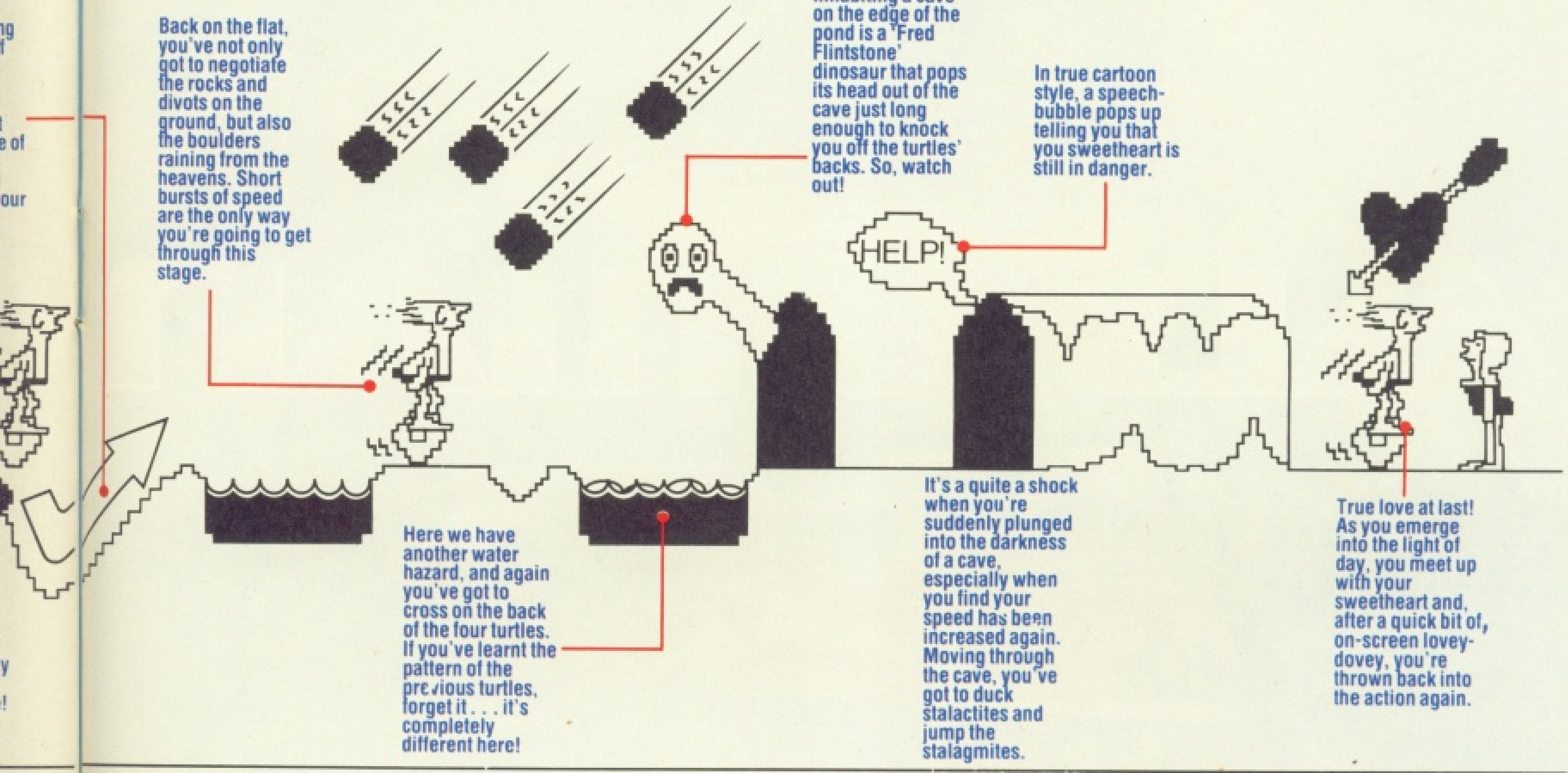
Where *BC's Quest* falls down is that there's just not enough of it! Two days of frantic playing (and it's addictive enough to make you want to do that!) allows most



BC's QUEST FOR TIRES
Software Projects/£9.95

people to get to the end. But from there on in, the game starts again at the beginning ... only this time it's just that bit faster. The trouble is, of course, that once you've seen the end you do lose interest and it's just a case of racking up the points. And this, perhaps, is the one advantage that *FRAK* has over *BC's Quest*. It's been running for a week now in the *Y64* office and it still hasn't been finished. And, when it comes down to it, whether you find the platforms as difficult as I did to leap on to just becomes part of the game and you have to live with it!

But then again, maybe this is the voice of *too much* experience talking here. We're hardly talking sophistication — there's two prehistoric cavemen, one on a wheel dashing off to free his mate, and another killing baddies with a yo-yo! This is arcade thrills at its best and maybe should be seen as just that. If you're usually to be found propping up that noisy machine in the corner of your local, take a good look — it should keep you off the booze for a couple of weeks if nothing else!




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There was a time when joysticks were a rarity ... now, it seems that most commercial packages expect you to own at least one! The Y64 play-test team — Teresa Maughan, Craig Rawstron and Martin McGuinness — set to work to find out which was the best joystick for particular applications. Check it out ...

JOYSTICK JURY

In the dark old days of computing, games packages came complete with the standard instructions for play — four keys defined to move you around and one to operate your lasers. Then, as the games got fast and furious, it became all-important for 'serious' arcade players to sport a joystick. And, as flight simulators came into vogue, use of a joystick not only became 'respectable', but a necessity!

It's A Stick-Up!

Based on a fairly simple potentiometer circuit, joysticks evolved into a more sophisticated device until nowadays, you'd expect to be able to move diagonally *and* have an auto-fire facility. But, with so many joysticks available on the market, which one should you choose ... especially when you've got the sneaking suspicion that some will work with some packages a lot better than the rest!

Plumping for three very different packages, the *Y64* play-test team set out to test the 'sticks exhaustively with each one. The comments were written immediately after each test (so the reactions were fresh!) and a mark out of ten was given for the joystick's overall performance with that particular package. Lastly, each of the team was asked to give the joystick a rating of 'HIT' or 'MISS'.

Obviously, a test such as this can't truly be definitive ... and, to a certain extent, it's up to you to look out these joysticks and test them for yourself. If there's one thing we have found, though, it's that each joystick suits not only different applications, but different people as well!



Passing judgement from their bench on high, our joystick jurors are Martin McGuinness. Teresa Maughan and Craig Rawstron,

I'm a 'keyboard' man myself (something I inherited from a mis-spent youth on another home computer!). But, having play-tested my way through this little lot, I'm convinced . . . I need a joystick!

The one thing I have learned from all this is that it's very difficult to choose just one joystick to suit a number of applications. For instance, the Joy Sensor is hardly ideal for a 'shoot-'em-up' game but when it comes to a spot of artistic expression, it really comes into its own.

The joysticks I thought the most of were the Red Ball and the Gunshot I, which gave just the right amount of control and speed of response. As for the supposed 'enhancements' of the originals, such as the Quickshot II and the Gunshot II, I'm afraid you're in for a disappointment.

Games like *Decathlon* and *Zaxxon* require a good grip on the base and a nice 'stick' action, so look out for the shape of the joystick. Have a look and check the suckers at the bottom actually stick, as well! Another thing to watch for is whether you can easily move around on-screen — a number of the joysticks tested moved you diagonally if you weren't careful . . . and that can mean you've lost a life!

On a last note, it may not have escaped your attention, but many of the newer games for the 64 don't include a keyboard option . . . so, one of these fine days, you're going to have to make a choice. And the best way is to get out there in the high street shops and test them for yourself!

Craig Rawstron

Before I started this review, like most people I thought that a joystick was just a joystick. Granted, they come in all shapes and sizes — but as long as you can play a game in the first place, surely any type would do? Well, after racing with *Decathlon*, battling with *Zaxxon* and painting with *Doodle*, I soon found that a good joystick counts for a lot!

Although *Decathlon* requires a steady wrist action, it's a game that can take a lot out of your joystick — flexibility and good response are just two features that'll be essential. For me, Gunshot I and Quickshot I battled it out for first place, but The Boss also fared well. *Zaxxon*, on the other hand, requires easy movements — and I was looking for a smooth-feeling joystick to fit the bill. The Boss almost stole the show, but again it was Gunshot I that tipped the scales.

Finally, all the joysticks were put to the ultimate test — working with *Doodle*. It's a really easy program to use anyway but, after drawing all sorts of designs, I reckoned that The Boss and Red Ball were the best of the bunch.

Overall, I'd recommend The Boss and Gunshot I for anyone who wants a multi-purpose joystick. **Martin McGuinness**

The best joystick to choose depends very much on whether you're a 'shoot-'em-up' freak or a budding Van Gogh! If you're looking for a joystick that performs relatively well over a range of software then, for my money, Quickshot I, The Boss and Gunshot II are the best of the lot.

The Joy Sensor was the only unconventional joystick tested but, as far as *Decathlon* was concerned, it was useless! However, it really came into its own with the graphics package *Doodle*; for accurate work, you'll find this one's really good.

In general, most of the joystick's we had a look at performed reasonably well with *Zaxxon*, but the Red Ball definitely stood out from the crowd — it's flexible and allowed effective control. Unless you enjoy making life more difficult for yourself, the Commodore 1131 and Junior Pro joysticks are best avoided.

Perhaps, what surprised me most was how important it is to use the right joystick with a particular package . . . it's worth sorting out what you'll be using a joystick for before you part with your hard-earned cash. **Teresa Maughan**

And The Rest

Just for completeness, there are a few other joysticks you might like to look out for in your quest for the 'perfect' 'stick ... these are the **Wico Red Stick** (£29.95), **The Rat** (£29.95) from Cheetah Marketing (Tel. 01-833 4733), the **Rushware Challenger** (£9.95), the **Sure Shot** (£15.95) from CCS (Tel. 0532 670625), Kempston's **Pro 5000** (£13.95) and Zap's **Proof** joystick (£7.95).

On a final note, watch out for a new tracker ball from Marconi, that's destined to hit the market at a hefty £60. Designated the **RB2**, we'll have news of this one just as soon as it's completed. You could also enquire at Euromax (Tel: 0262 601006) who sport a wide range of joysticks.

Y64 JOYSTICK DATACARD

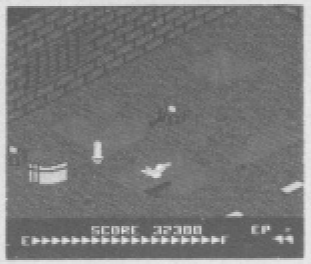
Joystick	Price	Address
Quickshot I Quickshot II	£9.95 £10.95	Spectravideo, 165 Garth Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 4LH. Tel. 01-330 0101
Gunshot I Gunshot II	£8.95 £11.95	Vulcan, 200 Brent Street, Hendon, London NW4. Tel. 01-203 6366
Commodore 1311	£7.95	Commodore, 1 Hunters Road, Weldon, Corby, North Hants. Tel. (0536) 205555
Red Ball The Boss	£29.50 £15.00	Wico, Computer Games Ltd, CGL House, Goldings Hill, Loughton, Essex. Tel. 01-508 5600
Junior Pro	£8.95	Kempston UK, 1 Singer Way, Kempston, Bedford MK4 27AW. Tel. (0234) 856633
Joy Sensor	£29.95	Suncom, Consumer Electronics, Failsworth, Manchester M35 0HS.
Competition	£10.95	Pro-Ace. (Although you can buy this joystick in the high street shops, we couldn't find an address for Pro-Ace anywhere ... can anyone out there come to our aid?)

Y64 JOYSTICK JURY-THE TOP TEN!

THE GAMES / THE 'STICKS

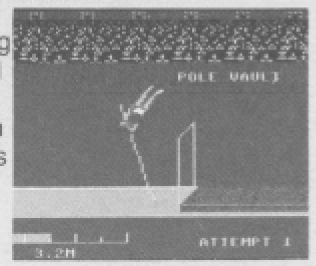
Zaxxon: US Gold's *Zaxxon* is probably one of the most difficult 'shoot-'em-up's around, combining as it does a number of arcade varients. The idea of the game is to avoid the oncoming barrage of low-flying objects, dodge the enemy's force-field barrier and missiles, and generally blast everything that moves to oblivion!

To survive this general mayhem isn't easy, and you're looking for a joystick that responds very quickly and fires rapidly if you want to last the distance. As the games takes you through a variety of arcade screens, the joystick will have to be fairly adaptable as well.



Decathlon: *Decathlon,* accordng to Activision, requires 'discipline, training, stamina and speed and, above all, the desire to win'. That's all very well but, without an unbreakable joystick, you've no chance of becoming a gold medalist!

Each of the 10 events in *Decathlon* involved a certain amount of running, and that requires a rapid left-to-right jerking movement of the joystick. It's hard work on the wrists but, more importantly, it provides a thorough test of the strength of the joystick's shaft and its ability to stand up to the rigours of being snapped in half!



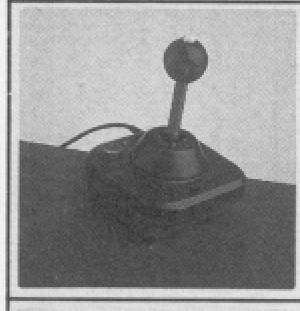
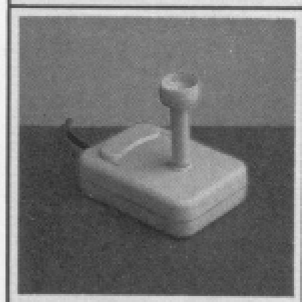
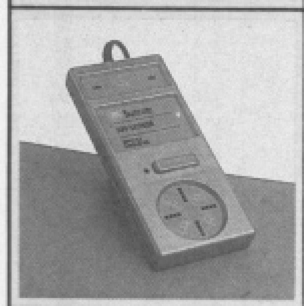
Doodle: Quicksilva's *Doodle* is a graphics package enabling you to draw anything from *Snoopy* to the *Mona Lisa,* provided you've got the artistic know-how that is!

There are 10 'painting' modes available — Sketch, Lines, Boxes, Circles, Colour, Zoom, Copy, Stamp, Letter, Disk and Print; different modes are selected by pressing the fire-button on the joystick.

Doodle requires very fine control and it's therefore a good test of a joystick's accuracy and smooth movement; no sudden jerks on the 'stick here — we're looking for versatility and precise responses.



Stick	Zaxxon		Decathlon		Doodle	
 QUICKSHOT I	**Teresa** It's got a real nice feel to it — especially the matt black plastic hand grips and a decent fire button. **Overall performance** 6/10	HIT	**Teresa** The 'stick wiggles quite easily, but doesn't respond very quickly. Not recommended for this game. **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS	**Teresa** This one gives you great control over the paintbrush . . . even at really fast speeds. It's great! **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
	Craig At the risk of sounding over-the-top, the Quickshot I really made my day! A definite hit! **Overall performance** 9/10	HIT	**Craig** I much prefer this joystick to the Quickshot II — it feels more comfortable, and has an auto-fire facility. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Craig** I must say that I reckon this to be as good as the Gunshot I . . . they're so alike in feel and response. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
	Martin I liked it! Smooth and effective, it's got great control ... which you'll need with a game like this! **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Martin** It's got a nicer feel than the Quickshot II, but it ended up making my hand hurt! Pretty good, though. **Overall performance** 9/10	HIT	**Martin** The joystick has a nice spring to it, which makes it a joy to use with this package. Better than Quickshot II. **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT
 QUICKSHOT II	**Teresa** Well, the auto-fire button's useful for a start! The joystick didn't respond very well to rapid movements ... **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Teresa** I'm not sure this one's got the strength to last out a few games of *Decathlon*! Quite the noisiest of the lot. **Overall performance** 5/10	HIT	**Teresa** The control is really awful with this 'stick. You can't draw diagonal lines very easily at any speed! **Overall performance** 4/10	MISS
	Craig Although not as good as the original, the auto-fire did come in handy. Good control over all movements. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Craig** You need to rely heavily on the response of the joystick — trouble is, it sounds like it's falling apart! **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Craig** I may not be able to draw very well, but this joystick didn't help at all! It's better suited to the arcades. **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS
	Martin It's got a lovely feel to it, and the auto-fire's great! For once, I didn't mind the suckers — they actually work. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Martin** I liked the joystick, but I'm not sure how it would stand up to a number of games of this sort! **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Martin** Not too bad . . . but not really to be recommended with a package like this that requires such fine control. **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS
 GUNSHOT I	**Teresa** The suckers hold the 'stick firmly, but it's really slow and movement is quite unresponsive. **Overall performance** 3/10	MISS	**Teresa** It's very similar to the Quickshot II, except that it lacks the auto-fire on the handle. Very good! **Overall performance** 6/10	HIT	**Teresa** I got a very good response from this one. The joystick's very flexible and the fire-button's just right. **Overall performance** 6/10	HIT
	Craig Generally, a good feel throughout the test-game — allowing quick reactions to sudden movements. **Overall performance** 9/10	HIT	**Craig** A pretty tough act to follow! The suction pads work well, until you want to move forward and ... splat! **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Craig** A much better performer that the Gunshot II. The actual shaft offers a good freedom of movement. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
	Martin It's got a very smooth feel to it ... but I'm not sure this game shows any good points, just all the bad ones! **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS	**Martin** Superb! This one gets the gold!! A joystick that'll make *Decathlon* even more fun ... **Overall performance** 10/10	HIT	**Martin** This is more like it! I had a *Mona Lisa* on my hands in minutes (*Ahem! Ed.*). Seriously, though, it's ace! **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
 GUNSHOT II	**Teresa** Firm suckers, and a good grip too! The firing button is very fast, as is the resulting movement. **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Teresa** A fairly standard joystick, that's not that much better than its predecessor. **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Teresa** This joystick felt a bit sluggish, and it was very difficult to control, especially at higher speeds. **Overall performance** 5/10	HIT
	Craig A great joystick for this kind of game — it's got the feel of Quickshot I with the auto-fire of Quickshot II! **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Craig** Not much of an improvement over the original, except for the auto-fire which I kept turning on accidently! **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Craig** One of the main problems of this joystick is that a change in grip can send the cursor all over the shop! **Overall performance** 3/10	MISS
	Martin This 'stick brings out the best in *Zaxxon.* The auto-fire's an asset ... and it's much better than Gunshot I! **Overall performance** 10/10	HIT	**Martin** I was quite surprised by this . . . I thought that 'version II's were supposed to be better than 'version I's. **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS	**Martin** Not a lot of difference between this and the Quickshot I. The auto-fire button's great. **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT

	**COMMODORE 1311**	**Teresa** Apart from being too small, there's no flexibility anywhere and the firing speed is disgusting. Awful. **Overall performance** 2/10	MISS	**Teresa** For a start, it's not suited to this type of game at all! The Commodore joystick is too small and rigid. **Overall performance** 1/10	MISS	**Teresa** Appauling, I'm afraid. Again, the fire-button's reliability is a problem. Not one to be recommended. **Overall performance** 1/10	HIT
		Craig The fire-button seems to work once out of every three presses. Let's just say it's unusable! **Overall performance** 2/10	MISS	**Craig** I don't like this 'stick at all. Swaithe your hand in bandages first if you're considering this one! **Overall performance** 4/10	MISS	**Craig** Rather surprisingly, I was quite impressed with this one's performance. Shame about my pinkies, though. **Overall performance** 7/10	MISS
		Martin This 'stick handles like a corpse, and the fire-button rarely works to cap it all. Not recommended! **Overall performance** 3/10	MISS	**Martin** This joystick has too many sharp edges that cut into your hand. I'd say it was completely unsuitable. **Overall performance** 4/10	MISS	**Martin** I hate this joystick! I thought artists had beautiful hands — I ended up with boils and blisters! **Overall performance** 4/10	MISS
	**RED BALL**	**Teresa** This one really goes well with *Zaxxon* — it's a shame there wasn't an auto-fire facility though! **Overall performance** 9/10	HIT	**Teresa** It's very responsive to the fire-button, and the shaft of the joystick is rigid enough to allow good control. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Teresa** The fire-button's unresponsive, but that doesn't matter too much! OK with diagonal lines too! **Overall performance** 3/10	MISS
		Craig The control is cushioned, giving a nice action all round; the base is fairly hefty, providing superior control. **Overall performance** 10/10	HIT	**Craig** I found the top fire-button kept getting in the way. Also, with no suckers, your hand will hurt after a while. **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Craig** This package didn't bring out any of the good points of this joystick . . . definitely unsuited to this package. **Overall performance** 4/10	MISS
		Martin What a disappointment! I found it virtually impossible to play this game with the Red Ball. Surprising. **Overall performance** 1/10	MISS	**Martin** Not bad at all! I didn't miss the suckers at all, but the fire-button on the handle is a real pain . . . **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Martin** The speed of response was quite slow, but I'm not sure this was the joystick's fault. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
	**THE BOSS**	**Teresa** An average performer. The handle slips around the shaft, which is a bit of a disaster! **Overall performance** 6/10	HIT	**Teresa** The shaft of the 'stick seemed a bit uncontrollable, making it difficult to do any clever manoeuvres on-screen. **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Teresa** The control was superb, although the moving handle did provide its share of problems. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
		Craig It's a bit jerky in response — what it needs is a decent set of suckers on the base. Then it'll be a winner! **Overall performance** 6/10	HIT	**Craig** Once again, the twisting of the barrel is quite annoying, but it's a great joystick for fast-moving games. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Craig** The twisting motion of the joystick's shaft sent the cursor all over the place. Abstract art? No thanks! **Overall performance** 1/10	MISS
		Martin It's an excellent joystick, allowing you to make very quick decisions when playing. It's the boss. **Overall performance** 9/10	HIT	**Martin** It's got a comfortable feel to it, and it did well with this game. Worth splashing out a bit extra for ... **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Martin** I felt like Michaelangelo — a pity my pictures weren't as good, though. Need I say more? **Overall performance** 9/10	HIT
	**JUNIOR PRO**	**Teresa** It's got a very fast response time, but it's difficult to manoeuver; it'll hurt your hands after a lot of use! **Overall performance** 5/10	HIT	**Teresa** Not very easy to use with this game — you really have to manhandle it and that can hurt your hands! **Overall performance** 2/10	MISS	**Teresa** This joystick's too small really — drawing a diagonal line is a real hit and miss affair! **Overall performance** 2/10	MISS
		Craig 'Fraid not — this is not a good joystick for your average professional arcade ace! Don't buy it ... **Overall performance** 1/10	MISS	**Craig** Definitely for the 'junior' type of arcade game! I ended up almost tearing the 'stick apart trying to keep up! **Overall performance** 3/10	MISS	**Craig** This is by far the best application for this joystick — in that you're not making too many demands on it! **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS
		Martin Pretty pathetic really. It's too small to get a decent grip, and the responses on-screen ain't that great! **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS	**Martin** If it had a bigger shaft to hold on to, it might be OK. But that doesn't do anything for the blisters on my hands! **Overall performance** 3/10	MISS	**Martin** At first I thought it hadn't got a chance . . . but after a while it got a lot easier to use than a lot of others. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
	**JOY SENSOR**	**Teresa** Very awkward to use after a conventional joystick. The response is fast, but control's quite difficult. **Overall performance** 3/10	MISS	**Teresa** I'm afraid this one's absolutely hopeless — some of the violent movements you make are impossible. **Overall performance** 1/10	MISS	**Teresa** This rather unconventional joystick comes into its own with a package like this — great for freehand work! **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
		Craig I love it! Just sit back and relax — and everytime you want to move the ship, just tap the sensors ... gently! **Overall performance** 9/10	HIT	**Craig** Useless for this kind of game — I ended up pressing both left and right sensors at the same time! **Overall performance** 1/10	MISS	**Craig** You can really apply your own personal 'touch' to your work, with instant reactions to slight finger pressure. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT
		Martin It takes a lot of getting used to ... but, once you've got the hang of it, it's great! **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Martin** It was quite good in the running games, but totally unsuitable for the rest. It's got to be a miss! **Overall performance** 2/10	MISS	**Martin** Apart from the lack of speed of response, this joystick's ideal for artwork of any kind, but too slow. **Overall performance** 4/10	MISS
	**COMPETITION**	**Teresa** The fire-button's great, as is the control you get from the joystick's rigid shaft. A solid little number! **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Teresa** It performed well with this game — good control coming from the rigid shaft of the 'stick. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Teresa** This joystick's far too rigid for a package like this. It's really difficult to get accurate control of the cursor. **Overall performance** 4/10	MISS
		Craig To get directional movement, you really need to push the stick ... but the fire-button's very responsive. **Overall performance** 9/10	HIT	**Craig** It's great for fast movement, but the base isn't that stable and it's real easy to overturn in anxious moments. **Overall performance** 8/10	HIT	**Craig** Although it's got a good response, this one's hard to handle. The shaft's too inflexible for good artwork. **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT
		Martin Fair, I suppose, but could've been better. Well suited to this kind of arcade action, though. **Overall performance** 7/10	HIT	**Martin** As the shaft is so inflexible, you get fast responses to your actions . . . but it's got an 'orrible feel to it! **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS	**Martin** This joystick's too stiff. It gives a good response, but it's not at all suited to this particular package. **Overall performance** 5/10	MISS

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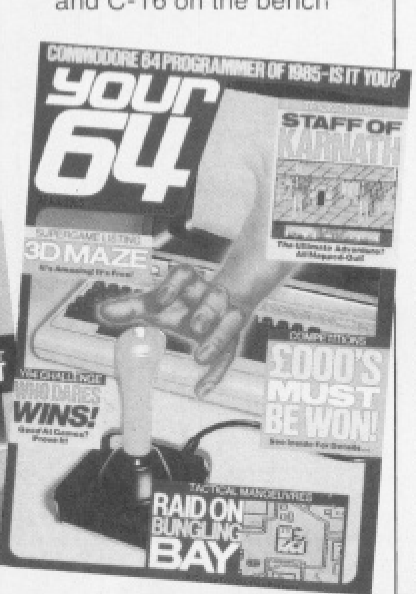
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- Lightpens — how they work,
- Are graphic art packages painting by numbers?
- Y64 machine code utility

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- Commodore's Music Maker
- Ghostbusters: the game
- We put Commodore's Plus/4 and C-16 on the bench





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- Wordprocessors — Six of the best!
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- Staff of Karnath — all mapped out!
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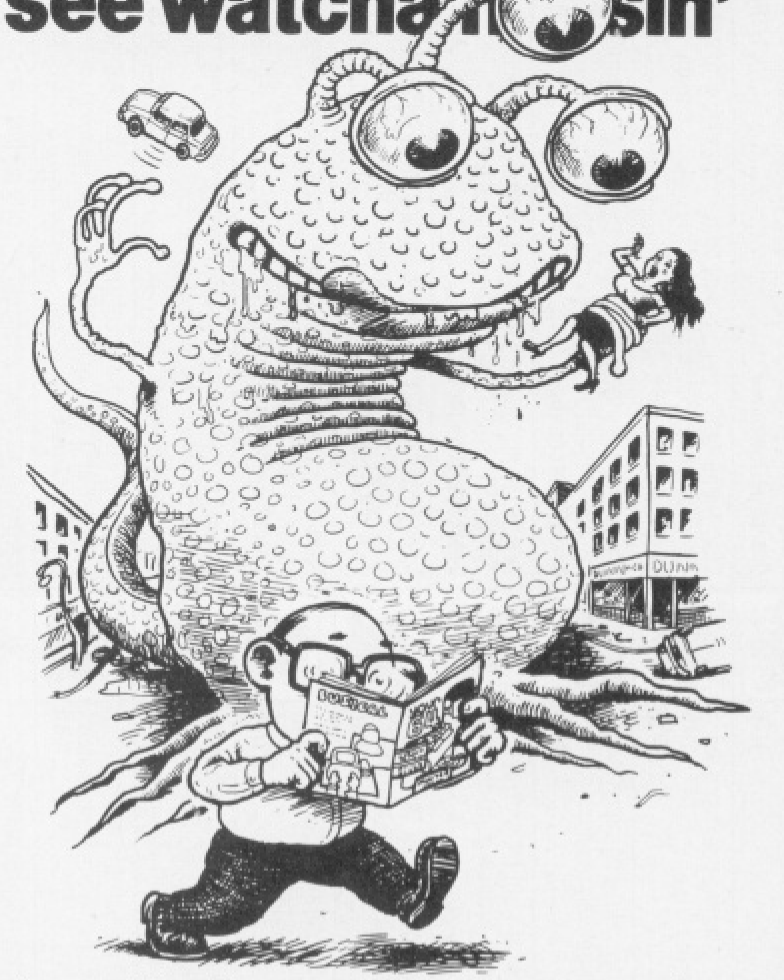
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VIZASTAR 64

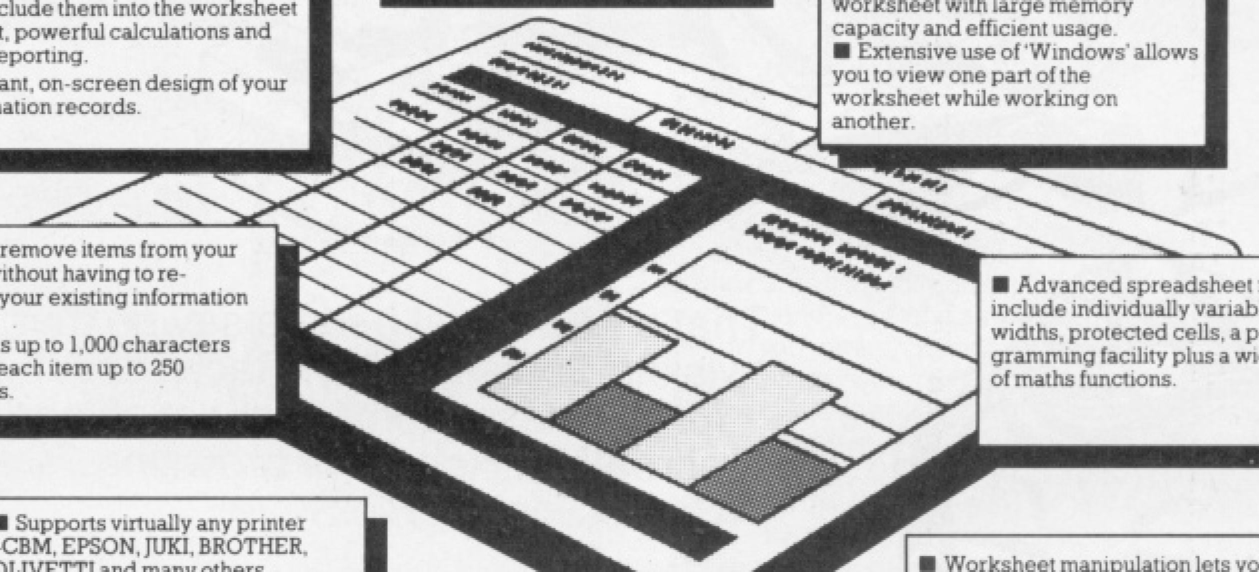
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YOUR 64/MIRRORSOFT

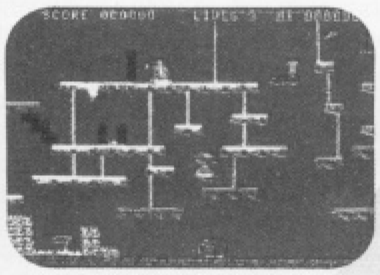
CREATE-A-GAME COMPETITION

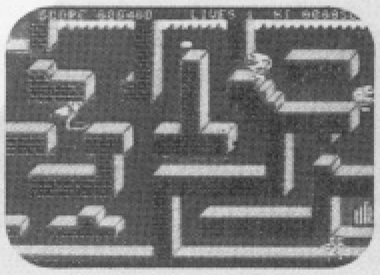
In the beginning ... there was Mirrorsoft's Games Creator *— all we want you to do is tell us what comes next.* Your 64, *in association with Mirrorsoft, invite you to create an original, inventive game using* Games Creator *... and straight away, you're in with a chance to win £1,000 and have your game published!*

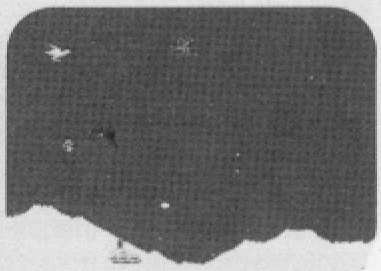
Writing your own games can be a real pain the neck, except when all the hard work's done for you by a games designer package. Mirrorsoft's *Games Creator* is just such a package, offering three specimen games — *Bouncer* (a platforms and ladders game), *Hawk Patrol* (a *Defender* lookalike) and *Snake Pit* (a 3D maze affair) — and a host of options you can use to create your own arcade knockabouts.

In fact, *Games Creator* could be said to free the programming spirit, so that you can apply your full creative powers to the actual design of your own original game. And this is where this competition comes in. Mirrorsoft is very confident that you'll be able to put a couple of games together in a matter of minutes ... what the company really wants to see is a bit of original invention.

The most original game, displaying imagination to the full, will win the bumper first prize, and there'll be ten runners-up. But the good news is that all entries for the competition will be considered for publication by Mirrorsoft ... and that'll not only put you into the programmer's book of *Who's Who*, but it'll also keep you in green crinkly 'Eurodollars' for a good while!







Up For Grabs

The first prize — for the most inventive, imaginative game, designed with Mirrorsoft's *Games Creator* — will be a fat cheque for £1,000 and, obviously, the best chance of having the game published. Ten runners-up will each receive £25 worth of Mirrorsoft software and, of course, have their creations considered for publication. (Publication of games will be according to Mirrorsoft's standard royalty deals ... which can't be bad!)

All you have to do is fill in the coupon below and send it, complete with your games program on cassette (or disk, if you're made of money!), to Mirrorsoft Competition, *Your 64*, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. All entries must be received by June 30, 1985, which should give you enough time to get the creative juices flowing.

Judging the games programs will be the Mirrorsoft program development team, in conjunction with David and Richard Darling (authors of *Games Creator*), and our esteemed *Y64* Editor, in the weeks following the closing date. Prizes will be awarded at an official presentation ceremony, to be organised nearer the date of the announcement of the winners.

Mirrorsoft Rules OK!

- Entries for the Mirrorsoft competition must be post-dated not later than June 30, 1985.
- Each entry must include a copy of the completed coupon, as well as a tape (or disk) of the game you've written using Mirrorsoft's *Games Creator*.
- This competition is closed to all employees of Mirror Group Newspapers and Pergamon Press, their agents and families.
- The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding the result of the competition.

Games! Games!

If you haven't managed to get hold of Mirrorsoft's *Games Creator* yet, do so ... you'll need a copy if you want to win yourself £1,000! Priced at £12.95 (cassette) and £15.95 (disk), you'll be able to buy *Games Creator* at most major high street stores and all good computer software outlets. In case of difficulty, phone Mirrorsoft on 01-353 0246.

I'm enclosing a game that I wrote using Mirrorsoft's *Games Creator* — and I reckon it's a winner! The name of the game is:

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Magazine Health Warning. If you're worried about using scissors on this page, don't! Use a photocopy instead ....

WIN £1000!

YOUR 64 PRESENTS

The Scribe

◆A D·I·Y ADVENTURE DESIGNER◆

Creating your own adventure scenarios isn't as difficult as you might think . . . especially when you're using Dougie Bern's *adventure writer. All you need is a Commodore 64 and a vivid imagination . . .*

It must be everyone's secret ambition to write their own adventure program, but there's a very good reason why few people do . . . and that's the time involved. Starting from scratch, it could take up to a month to sort out, and even then you've got the painful task of debugging the game before it's fit for human consumption.

Then, of course, there's always the moment when your friends manage to crack the adventure wide open . . . and you're left with a has-been, destined to sit on the shelf until you can think of something more useful to do with the cassette. Wouldn't it be better if there was a simple way of changing the data in an adventure program so that you could vary the scenario, or even change it completely! Welcome to *The Scribe!*

The technique employed here is to split an adventure into two separate sections of code — an interpreter program and a data base. The interpreter program controls the manipulation of the data you've specified in the database; the database can be modified by you to create your own locations and events.

DIY Adventures!

In *The Scribe,* we'll be giving you the complete interpreter program along with an example adventure in the next issue of *Y64* for you to play through. As you type in each section of the program, there'll be a line-by-line analysis of how the interpreter accesses the data and how to manipulate the listing as it stands so that you can construct your own adventure once you've understood the principles involved.

The adventure detailed in our next issue will hold no surprises — there'll be a map provided that'll tell you exactly what to do. The real adventure for you will be understanding how the program works and then using your new-found knowledge to create your own adventure; once you've got the hang of *The Scribe*, you might like to set your adventures in space, jungles, and so on. Just think, though, as soon as you've sorted the program out, you'll only have your own imagination to hold you back!

The best way to tackle *The Scribe* is to type in each section of the program . . . and then read the analysis. Then, once you think you know what's going on, head on to the next bit. That way, you won't get bored typing it all in at once . . . and when you run the program, you'll know exactly what to expect and what to modify to create your own adventure. And then, once you've tested it on your mates and they crack it first time, you'll know what to do, won't you — make it more difficult in a matter of minutes!

THE MAIN CONTROL LOOP

The code in lines 100-1260 comprises the main control routine for the interpreter, providing direction for the overall program flow. This is by far the most important section of *The Scribe* and you'd be well advised to have a close look at the accompanying flow diagram to help you sort out what's going on.

```
100 GOSUB 10000:REM SET UP ADVENTURE DAT
ABASE
```

Line 100 This directs program flow to set up the data in the adventure database at line 10000.

```
1003 OX=1:OFF=0
1005 PRINT "♥"
1010 GOSUB 2400          :REM PRINT ROOM
DESCRIPTION
```

Lines 1003-1010 Set up the test variables OX and OFF, and call the routine to print the description of the current location.

```
1020 CPY=1:REM CHECK STATUS
1022 COPY$=STATU$(CPY)
1024 GOSUB 1300          :REM CHECK STATU
S TABLE
1026 IF TRUE=0 THEN 1022
```

Lines 1020-1026 These lines scan the STATU$ table to see if any of the entries match the current conditions (location, objects carried and so on). Each entry in the STATU$ table is copied into COPY$ and the condition routine at line 1300 is called; this procedure is continued until either one of the entries in the Condition table is fulfilled or the end of the STATU$ table is reached.

```
1028 COPY$=STATU$(CPY)
1030 GOSUB 1600 :FLAG=0 :REM CARRY OUT A
CTIONS REQUIRED
```

Lines 1028-1030 Copy the action codes from the STATU$ table (or the last entry, which is always the action code) and then call the subroutine at line 1600 to perform any actions.

```
1040 ON LINE GOTO 1010,1020,1050,1210
```

Line 1040 Jumps to lines 1010, 1020 or 1050, depending on which actions were specified.

```
1050 GOSUB 2200              :REM GET NEXT CO
MMAND FROM KEYBOARD
1060 GOSUB 2000              :REM DECODE THE
COMMAND
1070 IF K1Y$="00" THEN PRINT:PRINT" AH D
ON'T KNOW WHAT Y' MEAN BOSS.":GOTO 1050
```

Lines 1050-1070 Call the 'input' and 'decode' routines, and check for a null input (or nonsense being typed in!).

```
1080 IF VAL(K1Y$)>=13 THEN 1140
```

Line 1080 Checks for a movement command.

```
1090 P1S=1
1100 IF MID$(LOCAT$(LCL),P1S,2)="00" THE
N 1140
1110 IF MID$(LOCAT$(LCL),P1S,2)<>K1Y$ TH
EN P1S=P1S+4:GOTO 1100
1120 LET LCL=VAL(MID$(LOCAT$(LCL),P1S+2,
2))
1130 P1S=1:GOTO 1010
```

Lines 1090-1130 Scan through the Connections table — LOCAT$ — for the location you want to move to. If a match is found, the program moves the player to the new location; otherwise, a jump is made to the Action table test at line 1140.

```
1140 CPY=1
1150 GOSUB 1500            :REM MATCH INPUT
TO ENTRIES IN THE EVENT TABLE
1160 ON LINE GOTO 1010,1020,1170
```

Lines 1140-1160 Call the routine to scan the EVENT$ table, matching the input to the entries it finds there. Control is then transferred to lines 1010, 1020 or 1170 via line 1160; if a match is found, program flow is directed to line 1170.

```
1170 GOSUB 1300            :REM TEST CONDITI
ONS FROM THE EVENT$ ENTRY
```

Line 1170 Tests the condition codes from the entry in the EVENT$ table (which was already matched up with the input codes).

```
1175 IF TRUE=0 THEN 1150 :ARE ALL THE CO
NDITONS FULFILLED
```

Line 1175 Repeats until a match is found or until it reaches the end of the EVENT$ table (see line 1150).

```
1180 GOSUB 1600:REM PERFORM ANY ACTION R
EQIRED
1185 CPY=1
1190 ON LINE GOTO 1010,1020,1050,1210,11
50 :REM CONTINUE ON RESULT OF ACTION(S)
```

Lines 1180-1190 Perform any actions and transfer control back to the relevant line number (see line 1190).

```
1210 PRINT :PRINT "WOULD YOU LIKE ANOTHE
R GAME ?"
1220 GET A$:IF A$="" THEN 1220
1230 IF A$<>"Y" THEN 1220
1235 FOR N=1 TO TNOBS:OBJ(N)=INOBJ(N):NE
XT N
1240 FOR N=1 TO 10:FLAG(N)=0:COUNT(N)=0:
NEXT N
1250 FOR N=1 TO LNCS:VISIT(N)=0:NEXT N
1255 LCL=1
1260 GOTO 1000
```

Lines 1210-1260 Re-initialise the program, and jump back to the start of the loop at line 1000.

TEST STATUS

This routine scans through COPY$ (which is more or less a copy of the current entry in STATU$ or EVENT$) and tests whether or not all the conditions in that entry are fulfilled. If any of the conditions aren't met, the variable TRUE is set to zero and the subroutine returns to the main control loop.

```
1310 LET TRUE=0
1320 LET P3S=1
```

Lines 1310-1320 Initialise the routine.

```
1330 IF MID$(COPY$,P3S,1)="*" THEN TRUE=
-1:RETURN
```

Line 1330 Checks to see if all the conditions have been tested for.

```
1340 C1DE=VAL(MID$(COPY$,P3S,1))
1350 C2DE=VAL(MID$(COPY$,P3S+1,2))
```

Lines 1340-1350 Copy each condition code and its parameter into C1DE and C2DE.

```
1360 ON C1DE GOSUB 1400,1410,1420,1430,1
440,1450,1460
```

Line 1360 Calls one of the condition tests at lines 1400-1460.

```
1370 IF TRUE THEN P3S=P3S+3:GOTO 1330
1380 CPY=CPY+1
1390 RETURN
```

Lines 1370-1390 If the condition is not fulfilled, this routine sends program flow back to the main loop. Otherwise, the routine loops back to line 1330 and gets ready to test for the next condition.

```
1400 TRUE=(C2DE=LCL):RETURN
1410 TRUE = (OBJ(C2DE)=LCL OR OBJ(C2DE)=
-1):RETURN
1420 TRUE = (OBJ(C2DE)<>LCL AND OBJ(C2DE
)>=0):RETURN
1430 TRUE = (OBJ(C2DE)=-1):RETURN
1440 TRUE = (FLAG(C2DE)=0X):RETURN
1450 TRUE = (FLAG(C2DE)=0):RETURN
1460 TRUE = (COUNT(C2DE)=1):RETURN
```

Lines 1400-1460 Test for the conditions specified in the EVENT$ table.

INPUT CODE MATCHING

The 'input code matching' subroutine scans through the EVENT$ table, trying to match the codes K1Y$ and K2Y$ with the codes at the start of each entry. If the codes match up, the rest of the entry is copied into COPY$ and the subroutine returns to the main control loop.

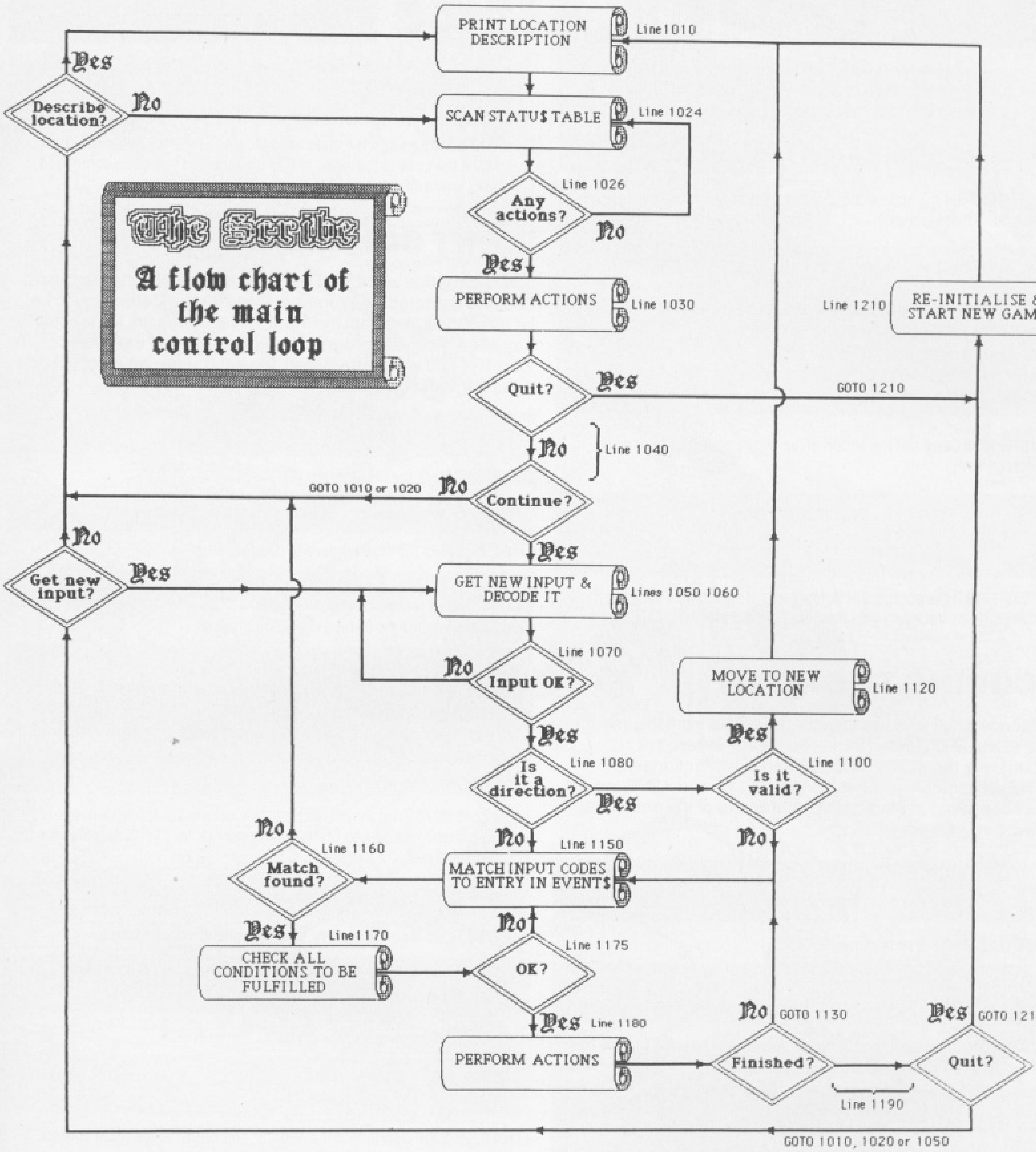
```
1510 IF CPY>ACTNS THEN 1560
```

Line 1510 Tests for the end of the EVENT$ table.

```
1520 IF MID$(EVENT$(CPY),1,2)<>K1Y$ THEN
 CPY=CPY+1:GOTO 1510
```

Line 1520 Tries to match the first code.

```
1525 COP2 $=MID$(EVENT$(CPY),3,2)
```




```
1530 IF (COP2$<>K2Y$ AND COP2$<>"00") TH
EN CPY=CPY+1:GOTO 1510
```

Lines 1525-1530 Tries to match the second code.

```
1540 COPY$=MID$(EVENT$(CPY),5)
```

Line 1540 A match has been found, so the rest of the entry from EVENT$ is copied into COPY$.

```
1550 LINE=3:RETURN
```

Line 1550 Sets the control variable line to continue and returns to the main loop.

```
1560 IF FLAG=1 THEN LINE=2:FLAG=0:RETURN
1570 PRINT:PRINT " SORRY BOSS YER CAN'T"
;
1580 IF VAL(K1Y$)<13 THEN PRINT " GO THE
R'";
1590 PRINT ".":LINE=1:RETURN
```

Lines 1560-1590 The end of the table has been reached and still no match has been found. In this case, a message is printed up on-screen and the program returns to the main loop.

PERFORM ACTIONS

If all the conditions in the first part of COPY$ are OK, then this subroutine decodes and carries out the list of actions in the second part of COPY$ (note that this is all the information that is given after the first asterisk (*)).

```
1610 FLAG=1
1620 P3S=P3S+1
```

Lines 1610-1620 Initialise the routine.

```
1630 IF MID$(COPY$,P3S,1)="*" THEN RETUR
N
```

Line 1630 Checks to make sure all the actions have been completed.

```
1640 C1DE=ASC(MID$(COPY$,P3S,1))-64
1650 IF MID$(COPY$,P3S+1,1)="*" THEN 167
0
1660 C2DE=VAL(MID$(COPY$,P3S+1,2))
```

Lines 1640-1660 Get the action code, check to see if there's a parameter available and, if there is, get it.

```
1670 LINE=5
1675 REM  PRINT
1680 ON C1DE GOSUB 2600,2620,2640,2660,2
680,2700,2720,2740,2760,2780
1685 IF C1DE<11 THEN 1695
1690 ON C1DE-10 GOSUB 2800,2820,2840,286
0,2880,2900,2920,2940
```

Lines 1670-1690 Carry out the action given by the action code and the parameters (if any).

```
1695 IF LINE<>5 THEN RETURN
1700 P3S = P3S+3
1710 GOTO 1630
```

Lines 1695-1710 If the actions are completed, program flow returns; otherwise, it loops back and gets the next action code.

DECODING THE INPUT

The 'decode' routine takes the string CNMD$ from the 'input' routine at line 2200 and matches the words entered (if possible!) with the words already listed in the dictionary (DICTN$). If a match is found, variable K1Y$ and K2Y$ are set to the codes found in the first two characters of the entry for each word in DICTN$.

```
2010 P2S=0
2020 K1Y$="00":K2Y$="00"
```

Lines 2010-2020 Initialise the routine.

```
2030 P2S=P2S+1
2040 IF P2S>LEN(CNMD$) THEN RETURN
```

Lines 2030-2040 Increment the character pointer and check if the end of the input string (CNMD$) has been reached.

```
2050 IF MID$(CNMD$,P2S,1)=" " THEN 2030
2053 IF P2S=1 THEN 2060
2055 IF MID$(CNMD$,P2S+(P2S>1),1)<>" " T
HEN 2030
```

Lines 2050-2055 Check for any spaces between the words in CNMD$.

```
2060 LET WRD$=MID$(CNMD$,P2S,4)
2070 P2S=P2S+3
2080 FOR N=1 TO WRDS
2090 IF WRD$=MID$(DICTN$(N),3,4) THEN 21
20
2100 NEXT N
2110 GOTO 2030
```

Lines 2060-2110 Test four characters in CNMD$ from the pointer P2S. The routine then scans through the dictionary (DICTN$) to see if a match can be found for the words entered by the adventurer. If a match is found, then program flow continues at line 2120; otherwise, it loops back to line 2040 and tries to match the next four characters in CNMD$ against the input word.

```
2120 IF K1Y$="00" THEN LET K1Y$=MID$(DIC
TN$(N),1,2):GOTO 2030
2130 K2Y$=MID$(DICTN$(N),1,2)
2140 RETURN
```

Lines 2120-2140 Assign the code found to K1Y$; if this has already been found then the code is assigned to K2Y$. Once this has been completed, program flow is directed back to the main control loop.

INPUT COMMAND

This subroutine waits for a key to be pressed on the keyboard; once it's detected a keypress, it waits for the Return key to be hit as an indication that the input's over. Once the full message has been received, program flow is returned to the main control loop; if a 'null' string is entered, the subroutine waits for you to enter something sensible.

```
2210 LET CNMD$="":PRINT:PRINT ">";
```

Line 2120 Resets the input string (CNMD$).

```
2220 GET A$:IF A$="" THEN 2220
```

Line 2220 Waits for the keyboard to be pressed.

```
2230 IF A$=CHR$(13) THEN 2280
```

Line 2230 Tests for the Return key being pressed.

```
2240 PRINT A$;
2250 LET CNMD$=CNMD$+A$:IF A$=CHR$(32) T
HEN CNMD$=CNMD$+CHR$(32)
2260 IF LEN (CNMD$)>40 THEN PRINT:PRINT
"COMMAND TOO LONG":PRINT:GOTO 2210
2270 GOTO 2220
```

Lines 2240-2270 Print the character that's been input from the keyboard up on-screen, and add it to CNMD$. The routine then returns and waits for another keypress.

```
2280 IF CNMD$="" THEN 2220
```

Line 2280 Tests for a 'null' entry, or one that's full of nonsense.

```
2285 IF MID$(CNMD$,1,1)=" " THEN CNMD$=M
ID$(CNMD$,2):GOTO 2285
```

Line 2285 Removes any leading spaces from CNMD$.

```
2290 LET COUNT(1)=COUNT(1)+(COUNT(1)<>0)
2300 PRINT:RETURN
```

Lines 2290-2300 Decrement the counter and return to the main control loop.

LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS

The 'location description' subroutine is called whenever an adventurer moves into a new location or when the 'LOOK' command is used. First off, the routine tests if there is any light (if FLAG(1) is equal to one) — if there is, then the description is printed; if the location's in darkness a check is made to see if you've got the torch lit.

```
2405 IF FLAG(1)=OFF THEN 2440
```

Line 2405 This line tests FLAG(1) to see if the location is dark; if there's a light on already, the program jumps to line 2440.

```
2406 COUNT(2)=COUNT(2)+(COUNT(2)>0)
```

Line 2406 Decrements a counter.

```
2410 IF FLAG(2)=OX THEN 2440
```



REWRITE THE HIGH SCORE TABLES

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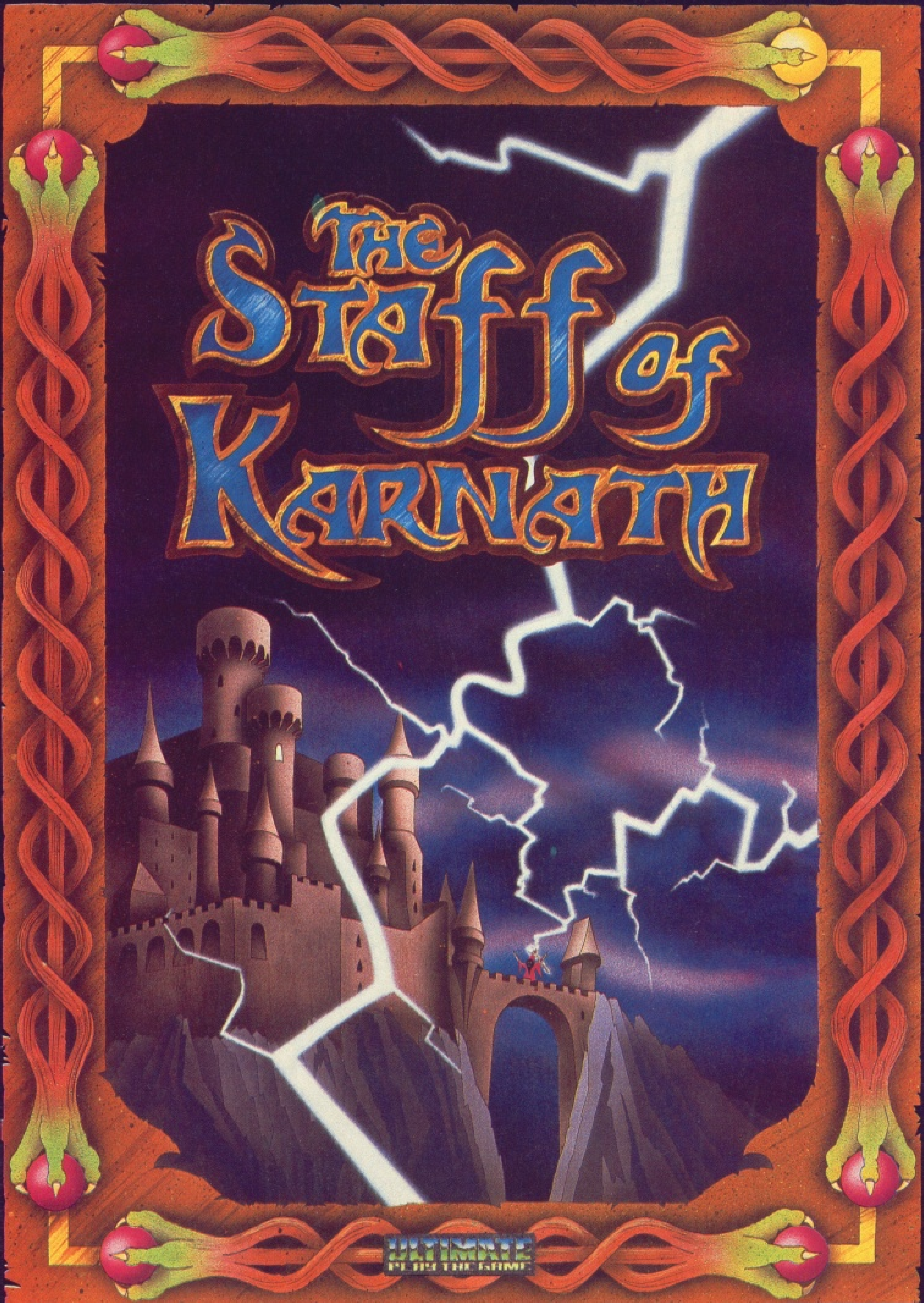
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and all good software retail outlets. Also available from
ULTIMATE PLAY THE GAME, The Green, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE6 5JU
(P&P included) Tel: 0530 411485

Line 2410 If the program has reached this line, then the current location is dark — thus, this is where you're checked out to see if you've had the forethought to light up the torch.

```
2420 COUNT(3)=COUNT(3)+(COUNT(3)>0)
2430 PRINT:PRINT"I'SS TOO DARK BOSS, A C
AN'T SEE NUTHIN'":RETURN
2440 PRINT
```

Lines 2420-2440 Decrement a counter — a message is printed up on-screen and the program returns to the main control loop.

```
2445 IF VISIT(LCL)=1 THEN 2455
```

Line 2445 Checks to see if the location has been visited before, and jumps to either line 2450 (if this is your first time there) or line 2455 (if you're just passing through again).

```
2450 ON LCL GOSUB 3500,3520,3540,3560,35
80,3600,3620,3640,3660
2453 GOTO 2460
```

Lines 2450-2453 Print the initial description of a particular location.

```
2455 ON LCL GOSUB 3510,3530,3550,3570,35
90,3610,3630,3650,3670
```

Line 2455 Prints up a shortened version of the location's description for those who've been there before.

```
2460 LET VISIT(LCL)=1
```

Line 2460 Sets the VISIT() flag for the current location to one.

```
2465 FOR N=1 TO TNOBS
2470 IF OBJ(N)=LCL THEN 2490
2480 NEXT N:RETURN
2490 PRINT:PRINT "THERE IS ALSO :-":PRIN
T
2500 FOR N=N TO TNOBS
2510 IF OBJ(N)=LCL THEN PRINT"   ";OBJCT$
(N)
2520 NEXT N: RETURN
```

Lines 2465-2520 Print a list of all the objects present in your current location, and then return to the main control loop.

CARRY OUT ACTIONS

Depending on the value of C1DE at lines 1680-1690, program flow is directed to the 'action' routine. Each section of the code performs one of the actions you'll find detailed in the Condition/Action codes tables, where C1DE is the action code and C2DE is the parameter 'xx'.

```
2600 PRINT:PRINT
2602 ON C2DE GOSUB 3000,3010,3020,3030,3
040,3050,3060,3070,3080,3090
2603 IF C2DE<11 THEN RETURN
2604 ON C2DE-10 GOSUB 3100,3110,3120,313
0,3140,3150,3160,3170,3180,3190
2605 IF C2DE<21 THEN RETURN
2606 ON C2DE-20 GOSUB 3200,3210,3220,323
0,3240,3250,3260,3270,3280,3290
2610 RETURN
```

Lines 2600-2610 (Action A) Print one of the text messages at lines 3000-3140, depending on the value of C1DE. For example, if C1DE is equal to five, the message at line 3040 is printed.

```
2620 PRINT:PRINT " OK BOSS."
```

Line 2620 (Action B) Prints the 'OK' message, and then returns to the 'perform actions' subroutine at line 1610.

```
2640 LINE=2:RETURN
```

Line 2640 (Action C) Sets the pointer LINE to transfer program flow back to the main control loop at line 1020 (see line 1190).

```
2660 LINE=3:RETURN
```

Line 2660 (Action D) Sets the pointer LINE to make the main control loop continue at line 1050 (see line 1190).

```
2680 LINE=1:VISIT(LCL)=0:RETURN
```

Line 2680 (Action E) Resets the VISIT() flag for the current location and makes the program jump to the main control routine at line 1010 (see line 1190).

```
2700 FOR N=1 TO TNOBS
2702 IF OBJ(N)<0 THEN 2708
2704 NEXT N
2706 PRINT:PRINT "YOU AREN'T CARRYING AN
YTHING.":LINE=1:RETURN
2708 PRINT:PRINT "YOU ARE CARRYING:-":PR
INT
2710 FOR N=N TO TNOBS
2712 IF OBJ(N)<0 THEN PRINT "    ";OBJCT$
(N)
2714 NEXT N
2716 LINE=1:RETURN
```

Lines 2700-2716 (Action F) Comprise a list of the objects you're carrying; a message is printed up if you've not got anything to hand.

```
2720 LCL=C2DE:RETURN
```

Line 2720 (Action G) Moves the adventurer from the current location (LCL) to the new location in C2DE.

```
2740 IF NOBJ>=5 THEN PRINT:PRINT"SORRY B
OSS, Y' CAN'T CARRY ANY MORE.":LINE=1:RE
TURN
2742 IF OBJ(C2DE)=-1 THEN PRINT:PRINT"YO
U'S GOT IT ALREADY BOSS.":LINE=1:RETURN
2744 OBJ (C2DE)=-1
2746 NOBJ=NOBJ+1
2748 RETURN
```

Lines 2740-2748 (Action H) Pick up an object (C2DE) or print up a message instead.

```
2760 IF OBJ(C2DE)<>-1 THEN PRINT "YOU AI
N'T GOT ";OBJCT$(C2DE):LINE 1:RETURN
2762 OBJ (C2DE)=LCL
2764 NOBJ=NOBJ-1
2766 RETURN
```

Lines 2760-2766 (Action I) Drop the object (C2DE) if you're carrying it; otherwise a message is printed.

```
2780 LET OBJ(C2DE)=LCL:RETURN
```

Line 2780 (Action J) Sets object (C2DE) to the present location (LCL).

```
2800 IF OBJ(C2DE)<N THEN NOBJ=NOBJ-1
2802 OBJ (C2DE)=0
2804 RETURN
```

Lines 2800-2804 (Action K) Destroy and remove certain objects from the game, depending on your actions.

```
2820 TEMP =OBJ(C2DE)
```

The Scribe

```
2822 OBJ (C2DE)=OBJ(C2DE+1)
2824 OBJ (C2DE+1)=TEMP
2826 RETURN
```

Lines 2820-2826 (Action L) Swop objects in the Object table; for example, if you light the torch, 'TORCH' is swopped for 'LIT TORCH'.

```
2840 FLAG (C2DE)=OX:RETURN
```

Line 2840 (Action M) Turns FLAG(C2DE) on; that is, it's set to OX.

```
2860 FLAG (C2DE)=OFF:RETURN
```

Line 2860 (Action N) Turns FLAG(C2DE) off.

```
2880 COUNT (C2DE)=VAL(MID$(COPY$,P3S+3,2
)):P3S=P3S+2:RETURN
```

Line 2880 (Action O) Sets COUNT(C2DE) to the value found in the next two digits of the string.

```
2900 PRINT:PRINT "YOU SURE YOU WANT TO D
O THIS BOSS?":INPUT A$
2902 IF A$<>"Y" THEN LINE=1:RETURN
```

Lines 2900-2902 (Action P) Verify the 'Quit' command.

```
2920 LINE=4:RETURN
```

Lines 2910-2920 (Action Q) Quit the game.

The Adventure Continues . . .

So far, so good! You should by now have typed in and understood the inner workings of *The Scribe*'s interpreter program. And, you've also probably got an inkling of an idea of how the database for a particular adventure is constructed. But don't think that's all you're getting . . .

In the June issue of *Your 64*, we'll be presenting a fully implemented, nine location adventure scenario, complete with accompanying database. Guiding you through the database step-by-step, you'll be given complete access to the systems used to build up the data tables, all of which can then be manipulated to create your own scenarios.

Dougie Bern's idea of an adventure takes you through a dark, dense forest, by snow-capped mountains and a fast-moving river, leading eventually to a finale in an old mine working. Of course, if that's not your ideal scenario, don't panic — using the scenario given next month as a basis for your own adventure, it'll be a matter of a few minute's work to transform your surroundings to that of a steamy jungle setting, a Wild West saloon or the wilds of Outer Space.

Of course, the entire listing of *The Scribe* can be accessed via Compunet (just as soon as possible!), but you'll still have to wait for the detailed description of how the database works before you can really go to town on the program. However, there's nothing to stop you thinking about an adventure you'd like to create — indeed, the majority of time spent preparing an adventure program is spent in the planning stage . . . which is something you can do right now! And, just to encourage you to think up a real mindbender of an adventure, we'll be announcing a competition in the next issue for the best adventure written using *The Scribe*. Watch this space for details next month . . .

Writing adventures is no longer a task best left to the programming expert — join us in the June issue, and don't forget to bring your imaginations with you!

Your 64

PROGRAMMER OF THE YEAR

commodore

Don't hide your bytes under a bushel. If you're a brilliant programmer awaiting discovery ... here's your chance! And you could be in the running for a Commodore 128. Let's be hearing from you!

Your 64 magazine and Commodore UK have teamed up and we're searching for a very special person — the *Your 64* Programmer of the Year. And it could be you ...

So, if you've written a program for the Commodore 64 — be it an arcade game, adventure or utility — or this is the push you've been waiting for, then we want to hear from you.

Byte High, No Limit

There'll be no limits to the subject matter or the number of programs you submit — just make sure it's all your own work. All submissions will be assessed on the programming skills displayed and their ability to carry out the function for which they were written.

The only handicap you've got is that we're going to impose a 10K limit on the amount of code you use. *(We've upped the limit to give you a bigger byte of the action. Ed.)* Of course, if you're into machine code, you've got an advantage ... but this isn't a test of who thinks best in binary. Each program will be judged for structure, use of sound, user-friendliness, professional polish and, above all, original ideas.

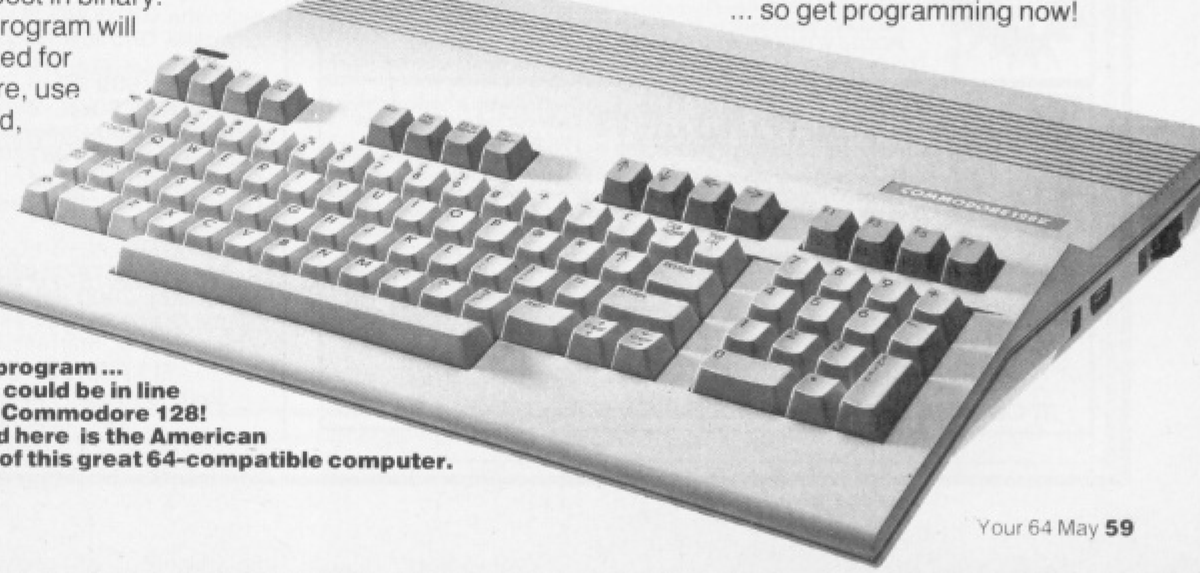
The best six programs submitted will be published in *Your 64*, one per issue starting in July 1985. The last possible date we can accept entries for the competition is October 31st, 1985 — but if you've already written a worthy program, send it off straight away or you'll miss out on the early judging.

The Winners

The six published programs will go into the final judging to choose the overall winner of the competition. But the best program won't just win its author the coveted accolade *Your 64* Programmer of the Year, there's also a brand-spanking new Commodore 128 up for grabs!

Of course, all six programs published will earn their authors a substantial fee from the magazine ... and Commdore UK are stumping up a bonus prize of your choice of Commodore software up to the value of £50 for each author. Can't be bad!

So, if you want your name up with the greats from the programmer's book of *Who's Who*, send your programs to Programmer of the Year, *Your 64*, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Fame and fortune could come your way ... so get programming now!



Write a program ... and you could be in line to win a Commodore 128! Pictured here is the American version of this great 64-compatible computer.

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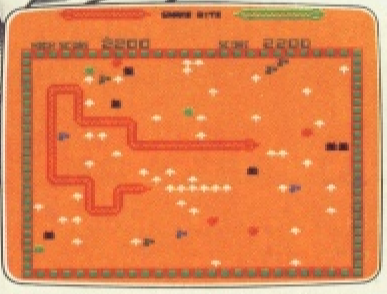
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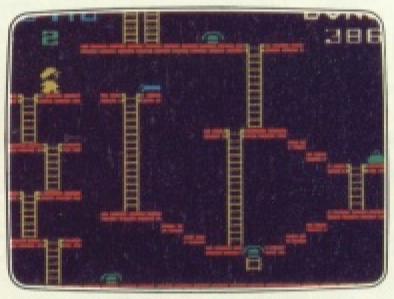
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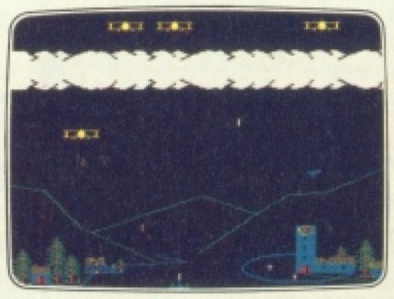
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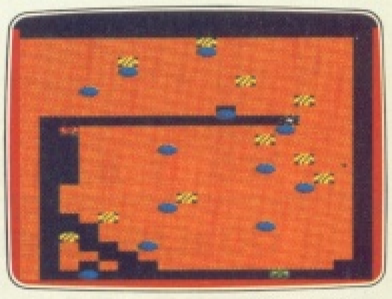
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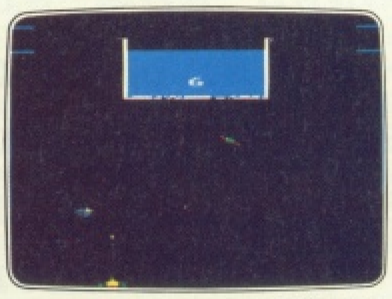
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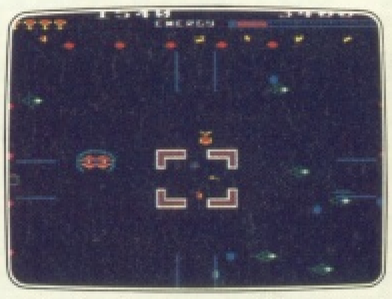
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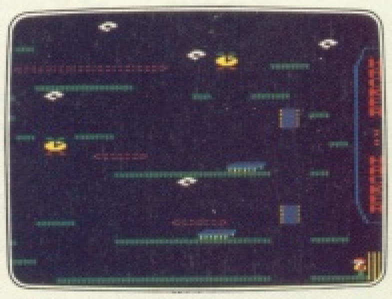
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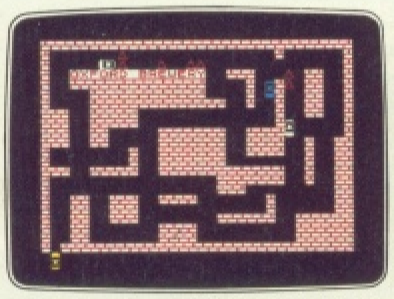
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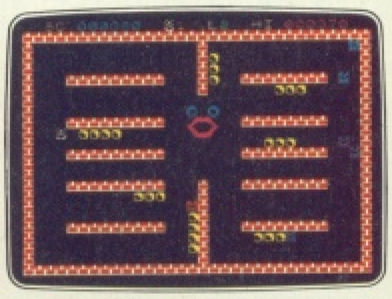
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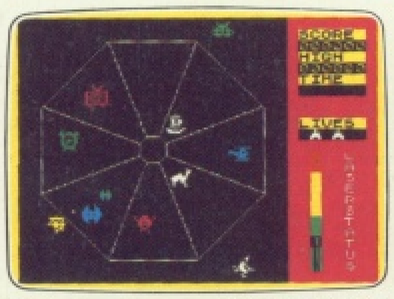
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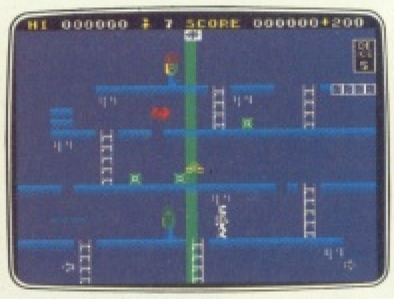
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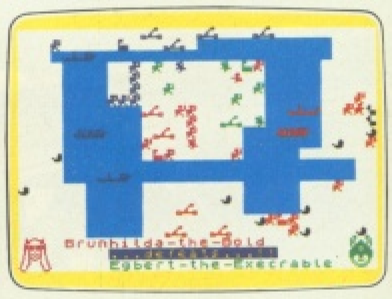
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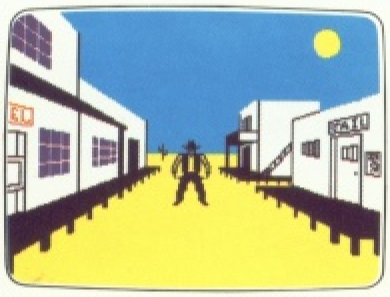
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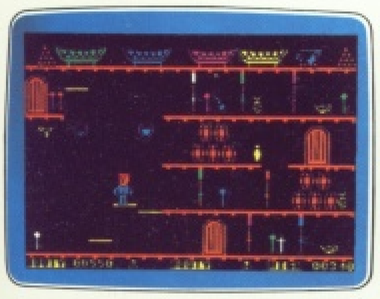
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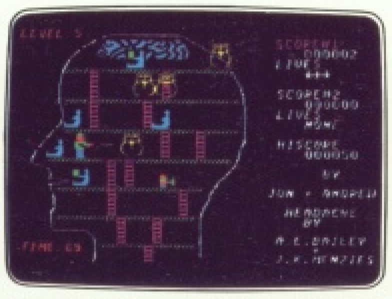
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